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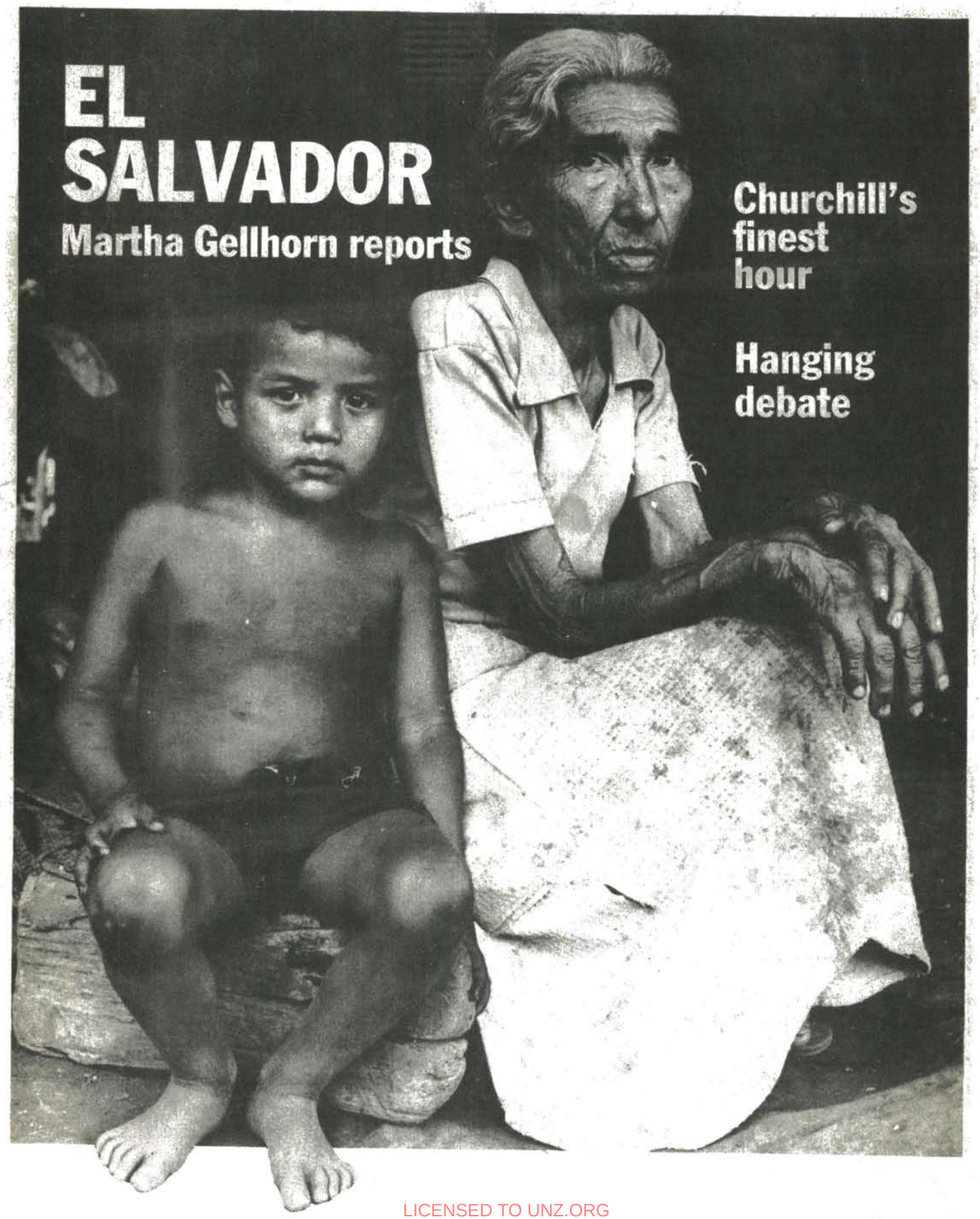

EL SALVADOR

Martha Gellhorn reports

Churchill's finest hour

Hanging debate

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New Statesman

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Coroners need reforming

ROBERTO CALVI is only the last of a series of inquest cases which prove clearly that the system of coroners' courts in England and Wales is in urgent need of reform. Even the more intelligent coroners themselves are increasingly coming to accept that the Coroners' Rules, under which they are required to operate, are both procedurally inefficient and hinder the search for the truth in cases of sudden or violent death. Thus the coroner in this second Calvi inquest agreed with the Calvi family that the rule which made it impossible to produce certain kinds of evidence before the jury, if the witness involved was unable to attend in person, made it difficult to present the whole picture surrounding a case.

These criticisms amount to an argument that the scope of the inquiry before a coroner should be much more flexible. The ancient common law office of coroner has over time become exclusively concerned with establishing the cause of death of the body before it in each case. The facts are brought out before the jury in the traditional adversarial manner, governed by formal rules of evidence. So far as the narrow question of cause of death is concerned, this may in most cases be a reasonable way of establishing the facts (though in the Calvi case the first inquest jury was persuaded to return a verdict of suicide on the basis of *such* unlikely evidence that the High Court quashed it and ordered the re-inquest). But it is a ponderous and (as the recent Yorkshire inquest into the death in Saudi Arabia of Helen Smith showed) often a very expensive process. Given that the investigation of the cause of death often involves some examination of outside issues, there is an overwhelming case that the public interest would be served by changing the law and the Coroners' Rules so that other things beside cause of death can be brought into the open at the same time.

At the same time, it is increasingly clear that some inquests should be removed from coroners and heard before the High Court. At law, particular cases are correctly judged to be too difficult or too serious to be taken by magistrates. The same logic should be applied to inquests. Most coroners most of the time are dealing with 'routine' deaths. There is no reason why a local coroner should be supposed to be able to deal competently with a case involving substantially wider issues, simply because the dead body in question happens to be lying within his territorial jurisdiction. A local coroner's court is not a suitable context for the examination of cases involving substantial issues of public importance. If an inquest is so important (as for example, Helen Smith's) that witnesses think it necessary to engage the services of lawyers of the eminence and price of Sir David Napley, then it is probable that the inquest should be in the hands of a judge.

Reform, though, is also required in the interests of relatives of the dead person. The form of a coroner's inquest inevitably means that in many cases relatives end up effectively as being themselves on 'trial'. In Mrs Calvi's case, the good name of the Calvi family was doubtless a sufficient reason for her campaign to get the earlier suicide verdict replaced, but the fact that she stood to benefit from a life insurance policy with a suicide exclusion clause was a relevant consideration. In cases where there is *prima facie* evidence of foul play, inquests often in effect turn into pre-trials of potential suspects. Legal aid should, therefore, be extended to those directly involved in such ways.

And, since police documents are the essential raw material of most of these kinds of inquests, there should be a proper requirement that they should be disclosed to those directly involved as witnesses in an inquest. The police are in effect the coroner's officers. Local coroners and local police inevitably develop close working relationships. This makes it doubly important that those who are seeking to protect their positions in the course of an inquest ought to have exactly the same rights as, say, those involved in civil and criminal cases to know the nature of the evidence confronting them. □

Silly Willie

WHEN THATCHERISM is long gone and forgotten its most likely contribution to British society is the part it will have played in undermining the Protestant work ethic. Her economic and industrial policy is producing cohorts of school leavers for whom there is less and less stigma involved in not having a job.

In the same way, her crass rejection of all notions of consensus has also advanced the demise of the House of Lords in its present form. For two decades there has effectively been all party agreement that the idea of hereditary peerages as the basis of membership of an upper house in a modern industrial democracy is not only indefensible, but plainly ludicrous. Her lack of understanding of institutional development and Lord 'Willie' Whitelaw's personal vanity, by reviving hereditary peerages, have together broken the 'typically British' compromise since 1964 that, until such time as general agreement on change could be reached, no more hereditary peers would be created.

(That Mrs Thatcher and Lord Whitelaw thought that the move was easier because he only had daughters is only an extra measure of the Victorian quality of this administration.)

Mrs Thatcher's unforced error over Lord Whitelaw and her refusal to create serious numbers of working Labour life peers make it all the more important that Labour should develop a positive and radical alternative. The present simple proposal that the House of Lords should be abolished is not convincing. There are serious arguments against a legislature without a second revising chamber. Certainly the House of Commons as it is presently constituted and operates would be an instant shambles as a single chamber Parliament. A reformed House of Lords offers real possibilities of constitutional reforms to include radical ideas for political devolution to Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the English regions. This is an area where a rejuvenated Labour movement should be campaigning for radical positive reform and not just relying on unthought slogans about abolition. □

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Government to hunt out 'political' projects

THE GOVERNMENT is planning an enquiry into the political activities of hundreds of community projects funded by the Department of the Environment under the Urban Programme. The plans have remained confidential up till now.

The enquiry was called for two months ago at the insistence of employment minister, Norman Tebbit, with additional pressure from the Treasury. Reluctant civil servants in the DoE's Inner Cities Directorate have been instructed to conduct an investigation into the use of Urban Programme funds, totalling £348 million. The organisations likely to be subjected to the closest scrutiny will include most of Britain's 45 law centres, who receive 80 per cent of their funding from the Urban Programme.

The enquiry is to be conducted by a committee composed of civil servants and two outsiders – one from the private sector, Marks and Spencer, and the other to be nominated from a national voluntary organisation. DoE officials believe that the presence of two outsiders will help to widen the focus of the enquiry and to lessen the emphasis on political activity. Organisations visited by the enquiry team will be told that its purpose is 'to review the performance and effectiveness' of projects being funded. But anything less than a full-scale political investigation is unlikely to satisfy the demands of Tebbit and Co.

It is hardly a coincidence that the enquiry comes hard on the heels of moves against community projects by the Manpower Services Commission – recently instructed by Norman Tebbit to suspend further funding to centres for the unemployed until the centres agree to accept a set of rules forbidding political activity as a condition of funding. An MSC directive has been sent to local officials instructing them to keep checks on their local unemployed centres for signs of political activity. The latest issue of *Voluntary Action* magazine reveals that the Community Projects Foundation has been told by the Home Office to devise a set of 'political guidelines' for its staff – after complaints to Prime Minister Mrs Thatcher, and the former Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, about the activities of two CPF resource centres.

Staff in voluntary organisations and pressure groups are linking these developments to the public criticism in April of the National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux by the then consumer affairs minister, Dr Gerard Vaughan. It is evidence, they say, of a new determination by the Thatcher government to control the activities of independent organisations. The latest straw in the wind is that the Department of Health and Social Security is considering mounting an enquiry into organisations receiving what is known as Section 64 grant aid. Most well-known of these is the often outspoken MIND.

Urban Programme grants in 1982/83 showed a marked increase in funds to black groups, totalling £7m. In Brixton 31 new black projects received just under £1m between them. News of the enquiry may well confirm the views of the sceptics in the black community who have warned that government grants are a form of control.

The launch of the enquiry into the Urban Programme was put on ice during the election. Now the new environment minister, Patrick Jenkin, is expected to give the go-ahead any day.

John Edgington

Cautious critics of Trident

STRATHCLYDE Regional Council's unprecedented independent public inquiry into plans to base Trident on the Clyde drew to a close last Friday. For a week the Inquiry Reporter John Reid, a professor of natural philosophy at Glasgow University, listened to arguments on the environmental, transport and employment implications of extending the Coulport armaments depot on Loch Long to accommodate the new Trident submarine system.

He was severely hampered by the repeated refusal of the proponents, the Ministry of Defence, to have anything to do with the Inquiry, or to allow the prefessor to view the site. They argued that it was premature as they had not yet fully formulated their plans for Trident II. Nearly all the evidence submitted was opposed to Trident and there was no cross examination allowed, so the handful of spectators who turned up each day found little conflict to excite them.

The Inquiry, which was set up by Strathclyde after the Government refused a proper planning inquiry, had to be confined to local government issues in order to avoid a legal challenge by Tory councillors. To the annoyance of anti-nuclear groups, Professor Reid also took it upon himself to define the limits of official secrecy in a way which seriously inhibited the discussion of safety issues.

Consultants appointed by the council argued that if nuclear bases remained in Strathclyde, a nuclear attack would cause up to 1.35 million deaths and over 90,000 injuries out of a total population of 2.4 million. If the bases were removed, they calculated that up to 720,000 people would be killed and 400,000 injured..

Professor Reid has stressed that the exercise was primarily to gather information to help Strathclyde make decisions and fight on the issue in the future.His report which should be ready within the next three months.

Rob Edwards

Greenham police congratulated

IN CONTRAST to the persistent conflict between some police authorities and their Chief Constables, the Thames Valley Police Authority, covering the home counties of Berkshire, Bucks and Oxford, considers itself very fortunate to have a police force controlled by an excellent group of conscientious and efficient officers headed by Chief Constable Peter Imbert. At its recent meeting on 24 June many tributes were paid to his low key policy adopted towards Greenham Common peace demonstrations, where a less mature approach might have led to a serious deterioration in the situation.

Nonetheless democracy is demanded in the home counties too, and Liberal and Labour members of the authority complained that they had been excluded from discussion on the scale of resources deployed at Greenham and also from meetings with the local district council on how the right to legal demonstrations might be maintained at less public cost and aggravation.

Elected members also questioned the police operation at the USAF base at Upper Heyford where hundreds of people were arrested between 31 May and 3 June. It was not so much a question of whether the operation was justified as whether the police were justified in taking Polaroid pictures of officers making arrests. Police had earlier stated that the permission of a person must be obtained before being photographed by police. The Clerk of the committee is now to investigate the legal basis of the police right to photograph unconvicted people.

Thames Valley's most controversial operation to date – 'Operation Major' – was also questioned for its police cost – at £180,000 considerably more than the amount of fraud discovered – and for its cost to claimants' legal rights. Members felt that if local politicians had been consulted the problem could have been cleared up earlier, more economically and less dramatically.

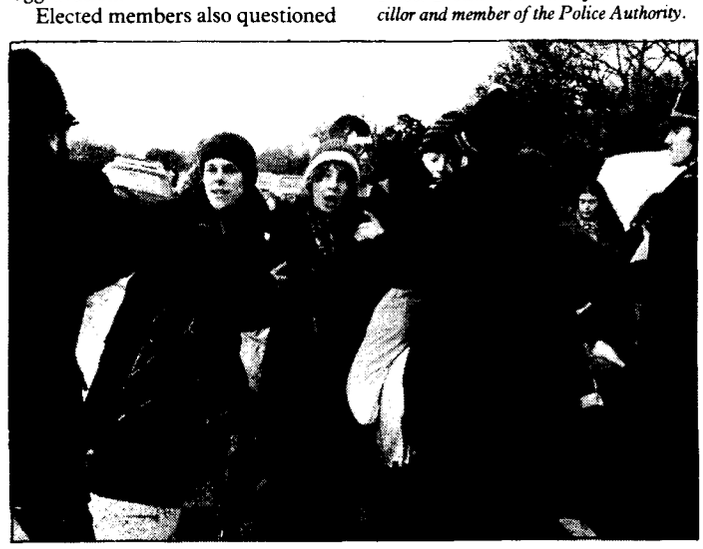
Imbert's report on Operation Major justified the arrest of many innocent people by claiming that many already had criminal records. On Friday he said that publishing this information was unusual. He also denies that the police suggested Oxford benefits fraud was backed by organised crime, although newspaper reports of this claim all cited 'detectives' as their source.

Imbert admitted to 'some mistakes' in the operation – specifically that police 'forgot' to inform the friends and relatives of 12 people held in custody. However, he maintained the operation was worthwhile because it reduced 'the strain on the Oxford Social Security benefits system'. Four weeks later, Oxford DHSS staff went on strike over staff shortages.

Housing charities and the Oxford claimants' union have also criticised Imbert's report.

Trevor Brown and John Rentoul

Trevor Brown is a Newbury Liberal councillor and member of the Police Authority.



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Have-it-away-day restrictions

PIMPS IN the red-light Kings Cross district have become a target for police action, after the setting up of a special police unit to deal with prostitution. Between 4 January and 15 May the unit, under Chief Inspector Nelson, arrested 15 people for living off immoral earnings, and 358 for loitering or soliciting for prostitution. In January to September last year, before the unit was set up, 1,242 prostitution arrests were made, compared with only five for living on immoral earnings.

The figures are contained in a report by Camden's Police Support Unit in policing policy options on prostitution, for discussion on 27 June. Kings Cross is a traditional prostitution area, because of the men passing through the railway stations; but the problem has been exacerbated by the 'Away-Day' prostitute, women who 'travel from towns in the Midlands and the North on cheap week-end or day return fares and work the area near the stations before returning home.' Fear of the 'Yorkshire Ripper' also caused a migration of Northern prostitutes to the London area.

While discreetly run brothels and massage parlours seem to be happily assimilated into suburban life, street prostitution causes distress to residents because 'non-prostitute women are mistaken for prostitutes and suffer offensive accosting and kerb-crawling . . . They dislike the late night noise, they resent the deterioration of the environment and the presence of men whom they see as potentially violent and intimidating.'

The report lists three policing options: a free market for prostitutes and punters; focusing on prostitutes; focusing on pimps, especially where they use violence, under-age prostitutes or are involved in serious crime. Despite the obvious attraction of the third option, the report points out that the law does not distinguish between a prostitute's lover – who may be unfairly harassed by police – and an exploitative pimp. Nor is it easy to make charges against a pimp stick. He is a pimp, by definition, only if the woman is a proven prostitute, so arrests against women have to continue. Even where the pimp sustains his power by bullying or violence, a prostitute may be too dependent on, or afraid of him to give evidence. Thus, says the report, the council and welfare agencies need to take a responsibility for helping women leave prostitution, or at least their pimps. The Police Support Unit, headed by left-wing ex-Hong Kong policeman Walter Easey ends up endorsing the new strategy of the special unit.

Vocal opposition to police action has come mainly from the 'English Collective of Prostitutes' who occupied a Kings Cross Church last November to protest against harassment. Feminists have always been ambivalent about prostitution, but clear-minded about the need for a law against the punters and kerb crawlers who accost women in the street.

In 1974, a Home Office working party said that while a law against men soliciting could not be sustained (who would prove it?) a law should be introduced against

> a man persistently accosting a woman or women for sexual purposes in a street or public place in such circumstances as are likely to cause annoyance to the woman or annoyance to the public.

A similar proposal was made by another working party, in 1976. In December 1982 the Criminal Law Revision Committee again recommended a new law, this time introducing three new offences of men accosting women for sex from inside their motor cars.

Unlike the excitement that indecent display or child pornography has caused among the chaps on the back benches, all but a few MPs have resolutely ignored the proposals. Unless someone suggests that kerb-crawlers, or prostitutes, or both be hanged, there seems little chance that this Home Secretary will treat the successive recommendations any more urgently.

Sarah Benton

MISCELLANY

Enterprising Britain

In an article about its new editor, Andrew Neil, last week's *Sunday Times* reported that 'recently, Neil became interested in cable TV and started a cable TV consulting company, National Economic Research Associates'. No further details were given, but perhaps we can shed some light on the matter. Neil's firm, which was incorporated on 4 May this year, is an offshoot of a long-established New York consultancy specalising in 'regulated utilities' such as cable TV. Neil and his partner, an American economist called Dr Irwin Mark Stelzer, give their place of business in the UK as Asphalt House, Palace St, London SW 1 (which also, coincidentally, houses the right-wing Economic League). What is rather odd, however, is that they have chosen to register their firm in the state of Delaware. Neil is a Scot and Stelzer comes from Colorado; so why Delaware? We cannot say. What we do know is why hundreds of other companies, both American and British, register themselves in Delaware: it has more relaxed company registration statutes than any other state in the US, and it has the lowest state tax. All most agreeable.

Without a sound

Andrew Neil's appointment adds another footnote to the long history of Rupert Murdoch's 'Solomon Binding' promises. One of the undertakings given to turn aside criticism when he bought the *Sunday Times* and *The Times* in 1981 was that there would be a 'journalist director' from each paper on the board and that, when the time came to appoint a new editor, the journalist concerned would 'sound out' and express the views of the staff. Some troublemaker unkindly asked Peter Roberts, the *Sunday Times*"s managing editor and 'journalist director', what soundings he had taken about the replacement for Frank Giles (who had become, after two and a half years, the longest serving Murdoch editor in the world). The unhappy Roberts fell back on the lame reply that he was *constantly* in touch with *ST* hacks and knew their views intimately without having to take formal soundings. Pressed further, he was forced to admit that, if they had been asked, his colleagues would have preferred an internal appointment to replace Frank Giles. So it's just as well that nobody asked them.

Pleased to Meacher

A cloud, at present no bigger than a marxist's fist, looms over the Left's strategy in the Labour leadership campaign. The intermittent battle between Hornsey (now Hornsey and Wood Green) Labour Party and the National Executive over the membership of Tariq Ali is likely to resurface, now the General Election is over. If both sides refuse to yield, the local party could be disbanded. If that happens, *all* individual members temporarily cease to be party members: they will have to be re-admitted one by one, a process that could take some time. And one of the local members who would be affected, and for a period be unable to participate in any formal activity – such as, for example, the contest for the deputy leadership – would be one of the residents of Cholmeley Park, Highgate, N6, the Honourable Member for Oldham West, Michael Meacher.

Dial-a-leader

Downing Street spokespeople are acting dumb about a mysterious 'Thatcher-Reagan' tape which was widely circulated in Europe during the election campaign. On the tape, which purported to be a recording of a telephone call between the Prez and the PM during the Falklands war, Thatcher was soundly scolded by Reagan for her belligerence – and particularly for sinking the *Belgrano*. 'It's not right,' the taped Reagan told Mrs Thatcher, adding: 'You caused *Sheffield* to get hit'. Thatcher warned: 'Look, our objectives are fundamentally different'. This ingenious forgery, compiled from extracts from the two leaders' speeches, was sent to papers and radio stations in the Netherlands and Italy (copies have also reached No 10). No one used it, however, because the forgers gave themselves away by adding, in a letter, a long list of those who were supposed to have 'authenticated' the tape – E.P. Thompson, Tam Dalyell, Paul Foot, John Pilger and, for good measure, *two* Duncan Campbells (one from the *NS*, one from *City Limits*). This, too, was a fiction. But the idea could doubtless be developed for another occasion. Perhaps the Margaret and Denis bedtime tapes, authenticated by His Holiness, the Supreme Pontiff, John Paul? Perhaps not.

Take your partners

It is not often that Frank Chapple is accused of being too closely identified with the Labour Party, but this is one of the many slanders being exchanged in a new row at the very-white-collar end of the trades union movement. John Thomson, the president of the Association of Management and Professional Staffs (AMPS), has resigned in protest at the proposed merger of his 5,000-strong association with Chapple's electricians, the EETPU. He is not happy that AMPS, which is non-political and not even affiliated to the TUC, will become part of a union affiliated to the Labour Party. 'We are all well aware of the history of the Labour Party,' he says, darkly. Thomson, who is the sixth member of the AMPS governing board to resign over the merger, favoured a merger with the right-wing, non-party political Engineers' and Managers' Association (EMA). But EMA subscriptions were too expensive for his colleagues to stomach. ASTMS also made 'aggressive' overtures, but were warned off by TUC general secretary Len Murray. AMPS members, half of whom work in managerial grades at ICI, are voting on the merger next week; the ballot is likely to be marginally in favour of the merger. This will give Chapple an interesting counterweight to his Fleet Street branch, which is currently trying to escape from his union and seek political asylum in Sogat '82. With excitements like this, who needs *Dynasty?*

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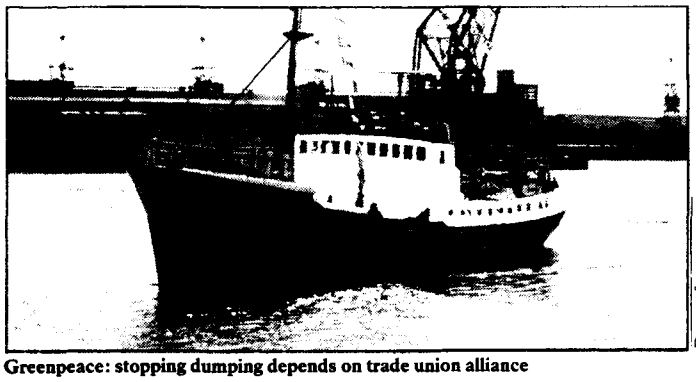

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Greenpeace: stopping dumping depends on trade union alliance

Wasting the ocean

OVER THE next three weeks Britain is planning to dump more nuclear waste in the Atlantic than ever before. The plan flies in the face of international opinion and would irreversibly pollute the sea, yet the British nuclear industry is intending to increase the amount of waste disposed of in this way by 50 per cent. But, encouragingly, all may not go according to plan; for the first time, environmentalists and trade unionists have forged an alliance which could prevent this year's dumping operation.

The British dumping ship, the *Atlantic Fisher*, was at Barrow-in-Furness this week, due to sail to Sharpness docks on the Severn estuary to take on board the waste before heading out to a dumping ground, 500 miles south-west of Lands End. At least seven members of the National Union of Seamen have already refused to work on the ship and NUS leaders are confident that they can stop the dump. Railwaymen and dockers are also pledged not to handle any waste due for sea dumping. The nuclear industry has admitted the possibility that the operation might have to be cancelled. As in previous years, environmental groups – including Greenpeace, Sea Shepherd and the Campaign against Sea Dumping – are planning non-violent action aimed at disrupting the *Atlantic Fisher*'s alloted task.

Successful disruptive action this year depends on effective trade union organisation and direct action on land or close to shore. Previously Greenpeace activists have hindered the dropping of waste drums by chaining themselves to dumping platforms, or by manoeuvring rubber dingies below the platforms. But the *Atlantic Fisher*, owned by James Fisher & Sons, has just completed a refit to enable it to dump the waste drums through a small hold below the waterline rather than over the side.

Last July the government White Paper on radioactive waste management confirmed that Britain would press ahead with sea dumping 'subject to continuing international agreement'. Yet last September the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on Britain, amongst others, to cease dumping forthwith. More importantly, in February this year the London Dumping Convention, sponsored by the UN, voted by 19 countries to 6 for a two year moratorium on sea dumping pending the results of a scientific investigation.

Britain dumps by far the largest quantity of nuclear waste at sea and is now almost alone in this practice. America abandoned it in 1970 and last year just four nations (Britain, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland) dumped a total of 134,416 curies of radioactivity at the North Atlantic site. Over 80 per cent of it came from Britain. This year Holland has dropped out, while Britain is planning to dispose of almost twice as much radioactivity as was dumped five years ago. Belgium and Switzerland have asked to use the *Atlantic Fisher* to dispose of relatively small amounts of waste later this year. Switzerland will stop dumping next year.

Britain's international isolation was reinforced at the London Dumping Convention when it failed to get support for a move to impose the burden of scientific proof on those who opposed sea dumping. Such a policy – dump now and ask questions later – ignores the evidence emerging about the possible health risks.

The kind of radioactive waste that has been dumped at sea is classified as 'low-level' and consists mainly of laboratory equipment, nuclear reactor components and contaminated clothing and containers. Most of it arises from the civil nuclear power programme, although substantial quantities come from military activities and hospitals. The nuclear industry is still trying to find disposal sites on land for medium-level waste. High-level waste is currently stored in tanks above ground at Sellafield in Cumbria pending a long-term disposal solution.

Jackson Davis, professor of biology at California University, argued forcibly at the London convention that the oceans are an unacceptable repository for radioactive wastes. Every study of dumpsites since 1974 has concluded that the wastes have leaked out and the theoretical models used to estimate the health effects of such leakages are seriously flawed. There is evidence that radioactivity from dumpsites has entered the ocean's food chain and is present in edible fish. As an alternative he proposed land-based storage which, he says, would have the advantage of being retrievable in the event of miscalculation.

Although Davis's arguments are dismissed out of hand by the British nuclear industry, his work does throw up some disturbing findings. One study he quotes found levels of radioactive caesium in sediment at a previous American dumpsite up to 260,000 times higher than the background level expected from weapons fallout. Levels of plutonium contamination at another site were between eight and 2,208 times the level expected from fallout.

Britain's refusal to give up sea dumping must give heart both to Japan, which plans to start radioactive waste disposal near Micronesia, and to America, which is considering scuttling its nuclear submarines at the end of their useful lives. Britain's first nuclear-powered submarine, *Dreadnought*, now decommissioned, is lying dormant at the Rosyth naval dockyard on the Forth awaiting a decision on how to dispose of its radioactive hulk.

Rob Edwards

Shrinking steel

NO WONDER that the new BSC boss, Mr Robert Haslam, feels that he can do the £55,000 a year job on a part-time basis. The steel unions are evidently willing to carry out a further demanning operation for him.

The collapse of the stance by the main steel union, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, for a nationally-negotiated pay deal for Britain's fast diminishing 85,000 steel workers, was the result of the ISTC's defeat in the week-long Rotherham steel strike in April. This left the way clear for the course of action BSC wanted in the first place, locally negotiated 'productivity deals' – job losses.

BSC hopes to impose similar agreements on all five of its remaining major plants, and indeed Scottish and Welsh plants indicated their willingness to negotiate locally, even before the Rotherham debacle.

The agreements, which the unions are unwilling to make public, are believed to be broadly similar. In the case of the Scunthorpe document, the version which will shortly be signed will differ in no significant respects from the draft version prepared by BSC on 4 May 1983. Although union officials claim that there is now only one sticking point – back-pay of bonus payments totalling 6 per cent – union critics say the agreement could halve the workforce at BSC's Scunthorpe works, about 7,000 compared with 16,500 four years ago.

They cite Appendix 3 of the draft agreement, which seeks massive amalgamation of jobs at the works, combining the roles of foremen and operatives, controllers and clerks, processmen and stocktakers, and indeed most steelworks activities. Its purpose is to set up 'flexible working practices' which 'can be improved upon to develop a more suitable working relationship and team approach between process/-craft and staff grades.' In the ore preparation plant, a draft document reveals, this would mean reducing the workforce from 130 to 67.

Matters of this nature seem to have taken up scant time at the ISTC's annual conference held in Jersey a fortnight ago. The union delegates were more concerned with who should succeed Michael Foot, and being photographed keeping fit. Scunthorpe's new Tory MP, Richard Hickmet, who now has three jobs, said that he would fight further job reductions in the steel industry. Scunthorpe's unemployment rate is about 30 per cent. So far, he has not commented on these proposals except to doubt the authenticity of the document.

The concern of the unions and the local MP will be of great consolation to the 3,000 Scunthorpe steelworkers whose jobs are about to be signed away for a six per cent bonus payment for the lucky few who remain.

John Hatton

Accident-prone nuclear convoy

SHORTLY after a nuclear weapons convoy carrying Chevaline warheads to the Faslane Polaris submarine basis on Monday this week passed through Dumbarton on the A814, mechanical diggers excavating beside the road fractured a major gas pipeline. Fearing an explosion, police sealed off the road and trains were halted on the adjacent railway line.

The Navy reportedly said that its vehicles, believed to have brought newly-assembled warheads from the Burghfield nuclear weapons factory, had already passed by and had not been at risk from the gas escape. But no explanation was given for a Royal Navy recovery vehicle which was let through the police roadblocks into the danger area shortly after the fracture.

The convoy set back from Faslane the following morning. It was sent on a 40-mile diversion, along the banks of Loch Lomond, to avoid the accident site.

Since Polaris warheads began to be replaced with the new Chevaline system about two years ago, the convoys, which pass through the western outskirts of Glasgow, have become much more frequent, increasing the fears of people along the route of a nuclear accident.

Duncan Campbell

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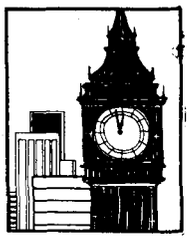

PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

Hanging: the case for a referendum

LIKE ALMOST everyone who reads this column – but, it would seem from the opinion polls, unlike the great majority of our fellow citizens – I hope the hanging lobby is soundly beaten when the House of Commons debates whether to restore capital punishment. Moreover, I hope that the matter can then be dropped once and for all. If this Parliament containing almost 400 Tory MPs cannot bring itself to resurrect the rope and the black cap, it is as nearly certain as anything can be in politics that no future Parliament will.

But you never know. Maybe the Commons will vote narrowly to bring back hanging for some offences, such as terrorism. Or maybe the abolitionist majority will be so slim that the hangers demand and win another debate on the subject later in this Parliament. What then?

Conventional wisdom at Westminster holds that the House of Lords may block the subsequent legislation. Now this would provide those of us who aspire to a libertarian society free of hereditary privilege with a fair old dilemma. Do we cheer their lordships on in order to prevent a return to judicial barbarism; or do we uphold the right of the Commons to pass laws, unfettered by the Lords, however distasteful those laws may be?

It is – just – possible to argue that hanging is a special case in which the Lords may properly intervene. The Commons vote will be a free one. Capital punishment is an issue for individual consciences, not election manifestos. This puts the subject on a different plane from normal political debates. By convention the Lords does not block legislation that flows from the contents of an election-winning manifesto. For the Lords to prevent or delay a restoration of hanging would not flout that convention. Indeed, it could even be argued that the Lords would be doing the proper job of any second chamber, however constructed: providing a bulwark for individual liberties against the encroachments of a House of Commons that goes off its collective rocker.

No, I'm not wholly convinced either. Once you concede the right of the Lords to block the actions of the Commons in any sphere, you find yourself immediately in an on-going line-drawing thin-end-of-the-wedge can-of-worms constitutional crisis situation. Suppose the Lords amends Commons legislation and restricts the definition of a capital offence, and that its amendment is allowed to stand. Then, after the next election, suppose the new House of Commons votes to abolish capital punishment once more – but the Lords votes against this fresh abolition bill? If we permit the Lords to influence hanging legislation in one direction, by what principle can we deny it the right to influence legislation in the opposite direction?

My own inclination, should the Lords seek to resist a bill to bring back the rope, would be to hang the constitutional principle rather than the murderer. We have lived with constitutional absurdities before and can do so again. There are times when it is better to be inconsistent and just, rather than consistent and unjust.

THE REAL PROBLEM, though, is the fact that we are capable of creating a situation in which the Lords can become our front-line defence against Commons tyranny. There is an alternative. It is one from which libertarians instinctively recoil when hanging is the issue, but it is a real alternative that deserves to be taken seriously on the Left: hold a referendum.

There is a principled case to be made both for referenda (let the people decide fundamental issues regarding the relationship between the State and its citizens) and against them (referenda detract from the authority delegated between elections to the House of Commons and thus undermine it). But, as we are discussing this privately among friends, why not admit the truth about the Left's opposition to a referendum on hanging: we fear that the people *might get the answer wrong*.

Well, yes they might. It is an inherent risk in any democratic process that the participants may give the 'wrong' answer. But the general wish to retain the decision on hanging in the hands of the élite for no better reason than distrust of the people is a form of arrogance as bad in its way as the opposite desire: to hold a referendum on *any* populist issue where the advocates of reaction think they can overrule the deliberations of Parliament.

The general case against referenda is clear enough. General elections exist to choose governments that are elected to carry through a package of policies, and to react to events as they subsequently occur. As long as a government can sustain its majority in the House of Commons, it should have the authority to propose to Parliament whatever measures it thinks fit. Besides, in the real world of interlocking problems with rapidly changing pressures at work, life is never simple enough or static enough to permit realistic decisions to be made by means of referenda. Furthermore, there is no evidence that most people wish to be pestered at short intervals with the need to make decisions about, say, money supply targets or revisions to the Common Market budget.

In order to make a case for referenda, therefore, it is necessary to specify what the limits of Parliamentary authority should be – the limits beyond which the Commons alone should not have the power to go. Constitutional issues, especially territorial issues, provide the most obvious example. Parliament can be deemed to 'borrow' the sovereignty of the people between elections; one of its principal requirements is to hand that sovereignty back, intact, at the following election. On that argument, any decision to change the State's borders, or radically to alter the political arrangements by which the State functions (eg devolution to Scotland and Wales) ought to receive separate, specific, popular endorsement.

I would argue that for a State to abrogate to itself the power to take the life of any of its citizens similarly goes beyond the proper 'borrowed' authority that the State should possess.

A referendum couched in those terms would, I believe, produce a very different answer from that consistently given in opinion polls on the death penalty. The vote would follow a period of extensive public debate in which the practical as well as moral arguments could be fully aired. When it is made clear that the IRA would welcome the opportunity to train more martyrs; that there is no redress for a person wrongly hanged; that most prison governers and barristers are abolitionists; that this is an issue that unites the Labour peeress Baroness Ewart-Biggs, whose husband was killed by terrorists, with Conservative MP Julian Amery, whose brother was hanged almost 40 years ago for treason: that, as Patricia Hewitt shows on page 12 of this week's *NS*, there is no evidence to support the 'deterrent' theory of capital punishment – I find it hard to believe the present poll figures would translate into a referendum result.

Perhaps I am wrong. Perhaps the electorate will opt for the less civilised alternative. If so, we shall all be the losers: but the losers of a battle properly fought – and not evaded. But if I am right, then civilised values will have triumphed – democratically, through the exercise of the popular will, rather than by courtesy of the House of Lords, and almost certainly finally. It would be hard to imagine the issue ever being revived.

In 1879 the Swiss held a referendum on capital punishment. By 52 to 48 per cent they chose to retain it. It would be a worthwhile, even elevating, exercise to try and demonstrate that the British are a trifle more tolerant and civilised today than the Swiss were 104 years ago. □

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INTERVIEW

Still an optimist

C. L. R. James talks to H. O. Nazareth about his views of contemporary politics and the future of Socialism and the working-class movement

C. L. R. JAMES IS WATCHING the Prudential World Cup cricket semifinals when I turn up to interview him in Brixton, where he now lives. 'Do you mind if we watch for a few minutes?' he asks. 'They will be showing the opening of Parliament soon, and we can switch it off.'

England is playing India at Old Trafford. In the other semifinal, the West Indies are playing Pakistan at the Oval. But, to his disappointment, the BBC concentrates on the England/India match and he clearly doesn't care for the batting of Tavare, one of the English openers.

I first met James in 1971, when he came to talk to the Black Panther Movement. He sat with a pile of books and papers and his watch on the table in front of him. 'I will speak for 60 minutes about the Pan African movement.' As he spoke he quoted from papers and books and, in exactly an hour, he was done. I was deeply impressed.

In October 1981, as a member of Penumbra Productions (a small media co-op whose members, all living in Britain, came originally from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean) I had the privilege of producing a series of six talks by James for Channel 4. His subjects were: Cricket; American Society; the Caribbean; Africa; Shakespeare; Solidarity in Poland*.

From cricket, to the opening of Parliament, to the success of Mrs Thatcher. 'She has a strong personality – she is ready to go and do things as women have always done in critical moments in society,' James says.

'None of the Tory men know what is to be done. They hesitate. They have a lot of experience, they know the dangers, and knew that Mrs Thatcher's ideas would mean a tremendous fall for her. And, but for the Falklands war, she would have fallen without a doubt. But that is the type she is.

'I listen to Michael Foot. 30 years ago he was the man of the Left. But today he is just repeating old formulae. Thatcher is going nowhere, but is dynamic. Foot is going nowhere, but is static. That's the contrast.

'There are 3½ million unemployed. Thatcher says, "I can't fix that." And the public know that. What she will do they don't know. But they certainly don't vote for their pockets. They fight for that in the trade union movement.'

Why, then, had the trade union movement not be able to help Labour more?

'For me to pass some observation on trade unions at the present time would be a mistake. I have some ideas and am watching certain developments. The Social Democrats got out of the Labour Party and formed their own. They couldn't stay because the mass of trade unionists, down below, rejected them. Otherwise, why did they leave? They have no programme, no policies. And the mass of the trade union movement are picking themselves up and shaking up the Labour Party. That's all I'll say.'

WHAT ABOUT the situation of black people generally; or, at least, here?

'I can't talk about "generally". Here, one of the great events in the history of modern Britain is the upheaval among blacks in 1981. These people came out and challenged the government. And people have said that only the thin blue line of police stood between the blacks and the capture of the inner cities. If it had gone on they would have had to call out the army. Black people are all over the cities of Britain. They don't like what is going on. And they showed it by coming out everywhere.'

Did he see any similarity with the way black people came out in the United States? 'Yes, but in Britain they are not used to it. They realise they don't have the police force to contain it. In Britain there are 3½ million unemployed, and what is significant, is that the whites came out too.'

Did the blacks not come out because of racism in Britain? 'No. That is obviously not quite true. You remember Enoch Powell? He thought he would be able to build from about 30 Tory politicians who were committed to racism. He failed so completely that he gave it up altogether and went elsewhere. They came out because they didn't like what was going on, and they were unemployed.

'Of course, there is an element of racism in every developed European country. Because Europe was built up as it is, from the 17th century, on the basis of the exploitation and social degradation of people who could be distinguished from them chiefly because they were a different colour of skin. But you also have it in Africa, in China, in India, because of religion, or caste, and so on. It is a social phenomenon in many societies. The important thing is to remember that Powell tried to institutionalsie racism and he failed because the British people wouldn't stand for it.' He is prepared to debate the matter with those who make a big thing of racism in Britain.

I ask him what he thinks of the development at Greenham Common.

'Greenham is one of the great movements of the day. Although the women came out as women, they were not demanding women's rights. They came out to say to the politicians, "You are not doing what is required. We want this nuclear business stopped." That, and the upheaval of blacks in 1981, those are the great events in British politics today.

'In my perspective, a socialist society will solve the problems of the day and set mankind on a new road – and part of it will be because of the pressure of the women. I think in the last 25 years, perhaps 30, women have begun to ask everywhere: "Who are we? What are we?" Within a generation women have begun to pose the question and the important aspect is – they begin to educate their children accordingly. The boys will not be corrupted for life by the age of ten or 12 as before. The women are going to help the women, help to educate the men, and to bring up children to see the women in a completely different way.'

IN 1948 JAMES circulated his *Notes on Dialectics* as a pamphlet. In it he analysed why the future of socialism lay with mass parties of millions of people. (It was published in 1980 by Allison & Busby.) After the rise of Solidarity in Poland he came to regard it as the most significant book of the many he has written on history, sport, politics, literature.

'I want you to understand my perspective. In February 1848 the revolution in France swept away bourgeois monarchy. Everybody came out. Then, in June, the proletariat in Paris came out and were shot

**Four of these talks are being broadcast on 4, 11, 18 and 25 July at 11.30 pm.*

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C. L. R. James at 82: people know who to fight against

down by the leaders of the previous revolution – but Marx said, "That's a sign that they have organised themselves independently, and they are going to continue to do so." And in 1871 came the Commune in Paris, abolishing army and police, making every wage the same, more or less. 1889, the Second International. Then 1905 in Russia, a national revolution – because of the railway, people could keep in touch with one another. In 1917 you have the great Russian Revolution. Then the Third International. Millions of workers were organised. But, after World War II, the Communist Party lost its dominance because the leadership was divorced from the mass of the population. And they failed.

'Now Poland are showing the way to the future of the whole working class movement, taking up what happened in Hungary. They are saying, "There will be no party leadership – the whole country is the party. We will throw up our own leaders." And I have said this before, everything depends on Moscow, they are dominating the Polish movement. If Moscow follows, then the whole of Europe will be gone from them into what Poland has shown. It is the foundation of the future.'

James does not care very much for what Bahro is saying in *Socialism and Survival* about the exhaustion of the resources of the earth by the industrialised countries, nor about the evils of consumer society, nor Bahro's comment that Marx might have been wrong about the role of industry and about the contribution of the working class to progress. Nor does he care much for the opinions of Gorz (whom he knows personally) in *Farewell to the Working Class*. Gorz says that people don't know what to resist, who to fight against, who the enemy is, where the front is any more. 'But the black workers in Britain know where the front is. The Polish workers, the women's movement, the masses of the population of Zimbabwe, Iran, Nicaragua, they know who the enemy is.

'Now let me tell you something. It is a tremendous step I am taking. Capitalism is a world economy. The vast populations of China, India, Brazil, South East Asia, Africa, and many parts of Europe too, they demand, and are waiting, too, for an expansion which only the economic power and social conceptions of the West can really contribute. It is the duty of the industrially developed countries to help them and also to develop themselves. In the next 20 years, by the end of this century, the world will have to realise that the economy is a world economy, or that there will be crisis and catastrophe beyond belief.

'I read Marx in 1933. It is now 1983. Fifty years. Nobody can tell me that the process that Marx analysed and I have studied, the movement of the working class, has been reversed.'

I left James watching the cricket. I walk past the Front Line on Railton Road to Brixton tube, my head buzzing. But I also feel both humbled and lifted by his optimism. He is now 82 and he says he hopes to live to the year 2,000 to ring in the phenomenal progress of the working-class movement. □

MEDIA

Toothless watch-dog

Geoffrey Robertson finds against the Press Council

THE PRESS COUNCIL came into existence 30 years ago – on 1 July 1953. Funded by newspaper proprietors, its proclaimed purpose is to provide a method of redress for people with complaints against the press, although its political significance has been to give the proprietors a form of insurance against the advent of laws which might curb invasion of privacy or cheque-book journalism, or guarantee a right of reply.

Adjudicating complaints against newspapers from members of the public comprises about 80 per cent of the Council's business. It repeatedly and publicly boasts that it gives 'prompt and impartial consideration . . . to any complaints made by individuals, chapels or unions'. Its judgments, it proclaims, 'are specifically designed to achieve reparation by correcting inaccuracies and, in appropriate cases, providing the right of reply'. It assured the most recent Royal Commission on the Press that 'the system employed for the reception, investigation, examination and adjudication of complaints offers a fair and effective answer to the need . . . and has the further advantage of being expeditious, wholly inexpensive to complainants and is characterised by an absence of bureaucratic limitations'.

I recently chaired a committee which tested these claims with a study designed to measure consumer satisfaction with the services offered by the Press Council*. With the assistance in every case of the complainant involved, 77 cases decided by the Council between 1977 and 1981 were analysed. In 45 of these cases, the complaint against the press had been upheld. Despite the fact that this was an unrepresentatively high proportion over the same period (the Council had upheld an average of only 30 complaints a year), the evidence revealed a Press Council whose procedures frequently give more cause for complaint than the conduct of the newspapers it purports to investigate. It showed:

1) Excessive and needless delay occurs between lodging the complaint and receiving the adjudication. Delays of between six to 12 months are common, sometimes extending to 18 months. (The Council has twice taken ten months to decide that a cartoon contravenes its ethical standards).

2) Unjustified obstacles are placed in the way of complainants. Too much emphasis is given to the need to 'formulate' a breach of

*People Against the Press, *published this week by Quartet.*

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good press practice and, in early stages, the Council acts merely as a post-box, passing letters back and forth from complainant to editor. The complainant has no power to demand an oral hearing, although such a right is given to any editor who desires to put his case in person.

3) The Council does not 'investigate' a complaint: it has no resources to do so. The onus is placed entirely upon the complainant, at his or her own expense, to do all the research necessary to 'prove' inaccuracy or unethical conduct. The adversarial procedure adopted by the Council, which puts the complainant, denied any right to legal representation, against the legal department of national newspapers, ensures that only those complainants with a high level of skill and articulacy are likely to succeed.

4) A newspaper is not bound to publish an adverse adjudication. It usually does, but the censure rarely receives the same prominence as the offending article.

5) There is no safeguard against press distortion of an adjudication, either by publishing it in part only, or by carrying it under *misleading headlines*.

The Press Council fails not only to live up to its own proclaimed standards, but also to satisfy any reasonable criterion for efficiency and effectiveness. The figures are stark. The most recent available show that between July 1977 and March 1980, 1,566 members of the public made complaints to the Council. Yet 1,061 of these complaints were 'withdrawn' at some stage in the proceedings. The Council's director comments that 'it is not possible for the Council to say what the motivation is', but the consumer survey suggests that the most common motivation is simply the Council's own practices and procedures.

THIS IS A MATTER of some concern, given the Council's overt lobbying against Frank Allaun's 'Right of Reply' bill. The Council's claim, which the government accepted, was that its adjudications already endorsed and enforced a satisfactory right to reply. However, its procedural delay means that any reply effected by publication of an adjudication is too remote in time from the attack to provide satisfaction. Although it issues regular criticisms of editors for refusals to afford the right, it has failed to make the principle stick. In its last published report, newspapers censored for denying the right included the *Daily Telegraph* (twice), the *Daily Express* (twice), the *Daily Mirror* and the *Sunday Times*.

But there is more fundamental criticism. An analysis of the Press Council's judgments on the 'Right of Reply' principle – its 'jurisprudence' on the subject – reveals that there are no less than eleven loopholes for editors to deny the right without attracting censure. In Council case law, the right to reply is overridden by the editor's right to be partisan, to make academic distinction between 'person attacked' and 'persons aggrieved', to reject 'overlong' replies, to refuse replies when the attack is contained in a quotation from a person not employed by the newspaper, and even to reject letters which dare to criticise journalists.

How can the Press Council be reformed? It is no longer biased towards the press. The Labour Party election manifesto spoke ignorantly of making the Press Council 'more representative' – yet its 18 lay members (balancing 18 press representatives) are culled from a wide social range. Indeed, the Press Council does not work effectively precisely because it is *too* democratic and amateurish. The Advertising Standards Authority conducts its business much more effectively with nine members; the Swedish Press Council operates impressively with five experts in fairly regular session.

But the real reason why the Press Council does not function properly is that the newspaper proprietors to whom it must look for funds have provided insufficient resources. Behind its pretentious title lies a small, private organisation run by three executives, served by eight clerical staff, whose time is taken up in processing hundreds of complaints. It has no funds to advertise its services, and its annual reports are always written three years in arrears.

Another problem for the Press Council is that it has no power of any sort and, despite repeated recommendations of Royal Commissions, it has failed to develop a code of conduct for editors and journalists, or even to produce a résumé of its decision on specific and recurring ethical problems.

The present state of the Press Council confronts its new Chairman, Sir Zelman Cowen, with a formidable task. If he is to raise its standards, he must seek additional resources from its backers, the newspaper proprietors, together with legally enforceable agreements requiring newspapers to cooperate with its investigations and to publish its adjudications with a prominence decided by the Council itself.

Far reaching reforms will be necessary in the Council's structure. The elephantine 36-member body, with its infrequent meetings, should be replaced by a small group of paid experts. Adjudications could then be delivered within days and thereby provide a real alternative to libel litigation. Instead of relying on members of the public to 'prosecute' newspapers for breaches of ethical standards, the Council should, like the Advertising Standards Authority, employ a monitoring team to vet newspapers on a regular basis. The Council's sponsors could also agree to advertise its services by donating newspaper space.

There is another side to the story. A great deal of investigation and paperwork goes on, inside newspaper offices, to prepare responses and to reply to Council requests. The press is as frustrated as anyone else by the Council's delays, and at its inability to make simple enquiries which would abort unjustified complaints at an early stage. Editors point, with some force, to trivial complaints which have run the gamut of the Council's procedures before being dismissed, and they are understandably annoyed at the standards set by some adjudications, which appear unduly solicitous of powerful people (the most common examples being Royalty and trade union general secretaries). Both complainants and the newspapers complained against would benefit from reforms. □

MEDICINE

Physician, know thyself

G. F. Newman has been gathering background on doctors

DOCTORS DON'T like people. Frequently they dislike them, sometimes they even loathe them. This is an inescapable conclusion arrived at when closely observing the core of the medical establishment, other than through the anxious eyes of a patient wishing to be made well.

Ever since the advent of modern medicine, doctors have been idealised, romanticised, mythologised, made heroes for deeds which are anything but heroic; passed into folklore on plaudits of gratitude for acts that were possibly unnecessary in the first place, or only made necessary as a result of their medical intervention in the second place.

No single profession is more closed and secret than the medical profession, not police or lawyers or politicians or teachers. None have their mistakes so frequently covered over with technical jargon that the average person finds impenetrable and which the average medically-qualified person resists penetrating out of a sense of oneness with brother and sister medics. There are honourable exceptions, of course. Information about wrongdoing down at the local hospital does sometimes spill out. Usually when doctors, mostly junior doctors, get so fed up with what's happening that conscience compels them to break their conditioned codes. But not often.

One case in point was what initially sounded like an apocryphal story about a consultant surgeon performing a lung resection on a cancer patient. The operation was a complete 'success', only he had removed the wrong lung. Subsequent enquiries, often through closed doors, revealed the basis in fact for this tale. No action was taken against the surgeon – the patient's family never knew of the error – but then all that was at fault was his clinical judgement. Had his junior staff 'gone public' over this, then their tenuous foothold on the medical career ladder would have become very slippery. Consultants are mostly beyond criticism. The only mechanism within the hospital for examining complaints about their behaviour is by the quaint 'Three Wise Men' committee. These are three senior consultants within the District Health Authority who meet in secret to examine the 'facts'. But even they don't have any power to reprimand or remove a consultant from his or her post. The system is about as effective as policemen looking at their own wrongdoing, so the outsider can be assured that it's both thorough and fair!

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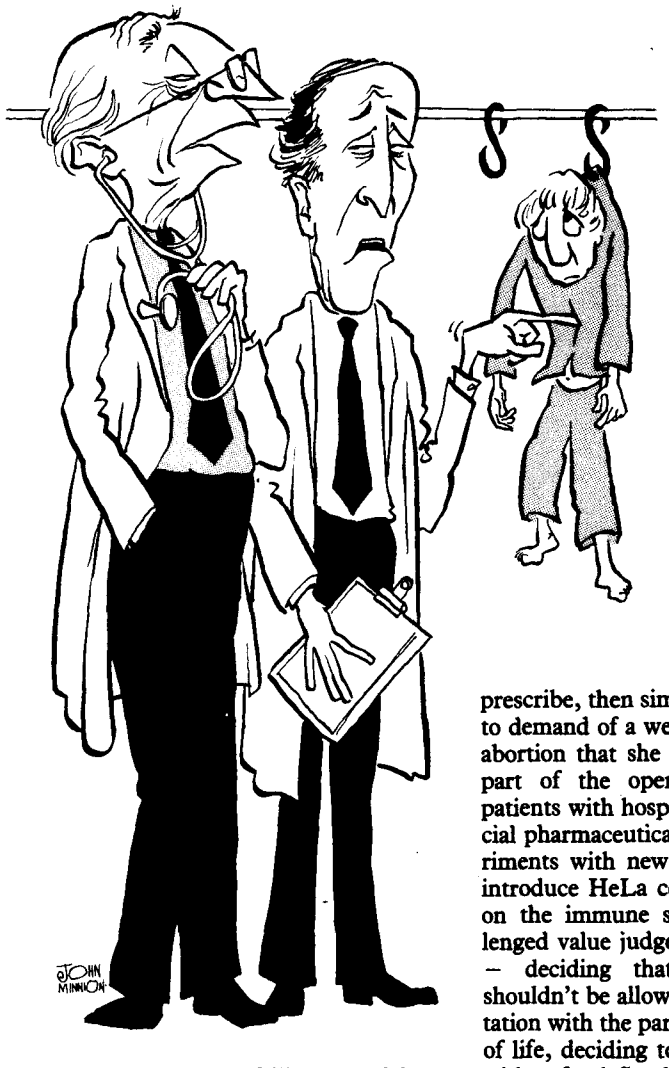
The patient who underwent the pneumonectomy died, not surprisingly, three days after the operation. But what those enquiries surrounding this case also showed, ironically, was that the patient who manages to survive similar 'heroic' surgery for a year, regardless of the quality of life, is added to the spurious statistical successes that attract to such drastic courses of action so many suffers and their families, both of whom are usually bereft of hope. The alternative – honest, straightforward appraisal from doctors – would certainly leave such 'heroic' operating lists short of victims.

Victims is what patients are. But victims often of doctors' arrogance and fear, or their psychological or emotional inability to tell the truth. This inability caused one doctor to tell a waiting family that the father's condition in the emergency room was worsening, rather than have to face them with the truth that he had died an hour ago. He admitted that it wasn't their feelings he was cushioning, rather that he couldn't bring himself to tell them. When questioned about this he thought perhaps unconsciously he couldn't face the prospect of his own fallibility. Doctors' conditioning process allows no such thing. This is why so many of them seek to perpetrate the closed and secret world they inhabit. They do so with evasion, non-involvement and plain dishonesty, both to themselves and their patients, terrified that the miasma that separates them from ordinary folk might be penetrated by understanding. One surgeon said: 'We mustn't attempt playing God, we must simply get on with the job.' This admirable sentiment was totally exploded when on his ward round he took on the god-like mantle – as though born to it – and judged a woman patient 'only a housewife', who could wait for an operation where there was a – largely consultant-created (in order to increase their power and importance) – waiting list.

Closed and secret worlds are an anathema, regardless of who peoples them. But the need to break open the door and let in a little light is never more urgent than in orthodox health care. The system is now dominated by the materialistic principle rather than the healing principle. Medical practitioners readily trade on the fears of patients in order to maintain their position and status.

Most patients go in fear to a doctor, as most people fear illness. In such a state they are ready to bestow upon the doctor that mythical mantle which accords the wearer the magical ability to cure – this, rather than heal, because often doctors have only a scientific knowledge to suppress disease through artificial means rather than the means to treat the whole person. Not many doctors are willing to have this power diminished through patients' understanding.

In medicine, as in all other institutionalised areas of life, knowledge is power. The less the patient knows the more in the doctor's power that person is. Often the attraction to this power is naked for all to see. Not only in the consultant – taking on his god-like mantle, or building his medical empire – but in junior doctors also. Even the newest house officer finds it a very attractive feeling to walk in on chaos, bewilderment,



fear, all the attributes of illness, and have people turn to him or her for hope, reassurance and cure. And in an exactly similar manner to the consultants – whose emulation inevitably means promotion – the junior doctor accepts the role. It provides an instant identity in an uncertain world.

PERHAPS IN DOCTORS more than in most people the membrane between the inner chaos and that outer order is more susceptible to rupture. This is why a lot of them are attracted to the medical profession in the first place – where authority is a stabilising factor. Rather like policemen, prison officers or similar figures of authority, doctors have an immediate and pervasive power over people. Their uniform is as clear to define; the most striking difference in these bodies is, of course, the general level of intelligence and sophistication. But to question them closely about their career motivation, beyond that ever-ready answer that father or mother was a doctor, is to touch a nerve that so often makes them recoil. While to question them closely about a particular treatment being offered brings anything from extreme paternalism – 'You don't need to trouble your little head about such matters' – to angry entrenchment as they prepare to defend their position and status in relation to the patient. But still without explaining.

It is in this climate that doctors are able without recrimination to remove the wrong lung from a cancer patient; over- or mis-prescribe, then simply alter the drugs chart; to demand of a welfare recipient seeking an abortion that she agrees to be sterilised as part of the operation; provide geriatric patients with hospital beds for the commercial pharmaceutical research units for experiments with new drugs – in one case to introduce HeLa cells to study their effects on the immune system; to make unchallenged value judgements about life at birth – deciding that a spina bifida baby shouldn't be allowed to live without consultation with the parents; and at the other end of life, deciding to let die an alert old man with a fecal fistula from an ileostomy that was raw and festering. But perhaps worse is the fact that so often these decisions are made without feeling for patients as people, only as unmanageable or intolerable symptoms, too often in a society increasingly less suited to inconvenience.

Because of their own needs and their professional priorities, which they have largely created, doctors no longer see the human body as the perfect, self-contained organism that it is. Despite, and probably because of, its infinite complexity it can and does sustain endless abuse. When rarely, in relation to its multifarious functions, it goes wrong, more often than not it's capable of righting itself, whether from a bruised toe or a cancerous growth – if people had the courage not to become patients, or doctors were sufficiently fearless not to interfere by means of invasive treatements. Fear in most people prevents or delays the healing process, even after identification and elimination of cause.

Medical practitioners have become the willing minions of drug manufacturers, aiding and abetting illness with such wonders as thalidomide, opren and valium – valium withdrawal is now a major problem but it's no less prescribed. What they might better be employed at is helping people identify the cause of their malfunctions and dispel their fears through genuine understanding. But of course as such related and integrated people themselves doctors would no longer need to wear the god-like mantle, instead they would simply be considered wise. □

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UNIONS

Diplomacy or division?

Don Thomson on the NUM's bid to unite East and West

BRITAIN'S MINERS, due to meet in annual conference in Perth this Friday, appear to have been cut off from effective foreign union solidarity, as a result of what Arthur Scargill has called a 'brave new experiment' in internationalism. In a new role as a '*détente* diplomat', he has been trying to set up a new international to replace the London-based Miners' International Federation. The MIF has been criticised for being too close to the foreign policy aims of Western governments. But so far there has been almost no support for a new international from unions outside Eastern Europe.

Last year, the NUM and its French counterpart (the FNSS which is affiliated to the communist-led Confédération Général du Travail) agreed to convene a meeting in Paris of the world's mining unions to discuss the creation of a new miners' 'international'. This was to be independent of both the Prague-based World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the Brussels-based International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). The meeting took place last April, but was attended mainly by unions from Eastern Europe and communist-led unions from the West. Apart from the NUM, the only other affiliates of the MIF to attend were the Sierra Leone miners and the Australian Coal and Shale Employees' Union, which has also recently affiliated to the WFTU.

The absence of the main Western and Third World non-aligned mining unions quashed any chance that a new international could spring out of the conference. However, the WFTU's mining section agreed to dissolve itself in name and take on the title of the new international, making its membership seem independent of the WFTU. Despite dissatisfactions with Western 'internationalism', the majority of Western mining unions is reluctant to see the MIF dissolved. Aggrieved that they had not been consulted by the NUM over the idea of a new international, they did not turn up in Paris.

Only one month after the Paris conference, the World Congress of the MIF, held every four years, convened in Essen in West Germany. Many delegates considered that this would have been the best platform for the NUM to explain its proposal. At the Essen conference, it emerged that the Paris conference had already created a 'preparatory committee' to launch the new international next Spring. Membership will be conditional on disaffiliation from both the existing internationals. The MIF Executive ruled that, since the NUM had agreed to go ahead with the new international, it should not be allowed to determine MIF policy for the next four years. So it took away the voting rights of the NUM and Australian mining union.

Camera Press

Scargill: worried diplomat?

Delegates agreed to the decision by 25 to 6. Scargill was then allowed to explain his proposal but, following furious argument, the NUM and Australian delegates walked out. In their absence, the Congress voted unanimously against the idea.

SO FAR, all that NUM rank and file members have been told about the Essen conference – through their union paper *The Miner* – is that the German president of the MIF, Adolf Schmidt, had 'blocked' the new international idea and that 'he brought to mind the style of an earlier Adolf'. This presentation of events now makes it virtually certain that MIF affiliates will call for a world labour boycott of the new international.

Since the Essen conference, the NUM executive has demanded that the MIF pay back its first six months' dues for this year and a special contribution for the Essen conference. In effect, the NUM has disaffiliated from the MIF, depriving it in future of the NUM's annual £32,000 in dues. The financial consequence is likely to be that the MIF will move to the offices of its Belgian affiliate and become more right-wing. Ironically, at the last MIF conference in 1979 the NUM lobbied hard to get Peter Tait, a former Yorkshire miner, elected as MIF general secretary, and succeeded by two votes. This was to prevent a feared German/Belgian take-over of the MIF and right-wing shift closer to the ICFTU. Now the MIF has had to accept an ICFTU grant in order to keep going with its staff of six.

Few credible non-aligned unions attended the Paris conference, because few were invited – a consequence of the lack of contact between developed and Third World unions. Of those that did, the Zambian miners' union has withdrawn its support and the Bolivian miners are likely to do so. Their union, the FSTMB, groups different ideological currents on the Left and there will be strong membership opposition to a new international, if it was seen to be linked to communist parties and the WFTU.

Underlying this controversy is a different ideological dispute. For while Scargill attributes the main problems of international unionism to the East-West divide – and therefore sees the new international as an important effort to overcome it – Peter Tait, a former Communist, argues that the real problem is government control both in the East and West and that the real divide is between these international labour bureaucracies and their rank and file membership.

Tait has undoubtedly been influenced in this by meeting radical non-aligned Third World unions. Now he thinks that, at a time when there is a desperate need for British miners to develop horizontal links with foreign counterparts, this new international will pull in the opposite direction. It will not only reinforce the isolation of Third World unions, but it also will not achieve the aim of strengthening East-West solidarity. The state-approved East European unions are unlikely to welcome Western support for Solidarność, or anything which appears to 'interfere' in East European labour disputes.

Meanwhile, Scargill has been carpeted by the TUC's Len Murray for 'splitting' the international labour movement. Other union leaders are saying that, if instead Scargill had chosen as his international debut to challenge the secrecy and Foreign Office domination of the TUC's international policies, he could have got widespread acclaim.□

HANGING

Terror and anomalies

Patricia Hewitt previews the capital punishment debate

IF THE HANGERS win a majority of MPs next month, they will set in motion legislation which is opposed by most judges and practising lawyers; which will delight the Provisional IRA and severely embarrass the Dublin government; which will isolate the British government from most of Western Europe; which poses insuperable problems for the Parliamentary draftsmen and which is likely to be rejected by the Lords. No wonder that the government – even with a Prime Minister who favours capital punishment and a Home Secretary who would hang terrorists – has decided that the forward march of Thatcherism should not be diverted in such a direction.

The motion most likely to succeed in the House of Commons – the proposal to restore execution for terrorist murderers and

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the killers of police and prison officers – is, of all death penalty proposals, the least defensible. It would restore the distinction between capital and non-capital murders created by the 1957 Homicide Act (passed on a Government Whip after the House of Lords had rejected Commons legislation to abolish the death penalty for murder). Under the 1957 Act, the husband who shot his wife could be hanged, but not the husband who used a hatchet. The murderer who raped and strangled his victim and then took her handbag could be executed, but not the rapist who failed to rob his victim. Eight years of this convinced the judiciary – who in turn persuaded a majority in the Lords – to support abolition in 1965.

Any law restoring the death penalty for some murderers will create the same grim anomalies. The brutal killer of a sub-postmaster will not be available for execution. Nor will the escaped prisoner who kills an innocent bystander while aiming at the pursuing police officer. As for the definition of a 'terrorist' murderer, William Whitelaw admitted during the 1979 debate on the death penalty that the Prevention of Terrorism Act definition ('the use of violence for political ends') simply would not do if a person's life, not merely their liberty, were in question.

No one has been hanged in Northern Ireland since 1961, when James McGladdery, convicted of the murder of a young woman, Pearl Gamble, was executed in Belfast. But, eleven years ago, the gallows were again prepared in Crumlin Road gaol – this time for a 29-year-old UDA member, Edward Brown, who had been convicted of murdering a policeman. (Stormont, while abolishing capital punishment for most murders in 1966, had retained it for the murder of a police officer or soldier.)

On 6 April, Brown was reprieved. As Merlyn Rees, another former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, told the House of Commons in 1979: 'If that man had been hanged the Army would not have been able to hold East Belfast and West Belfast that evening. The right hon gentleman (Mr Whitelaw) was then faced with the case of a Catholic who killed a soldier. When the right hon gentleman realised that because of what would happen in the Province he could not allow those men to be hanged, capital punishment in Northern Ireland was abolished.'

INDEED, NO IRA member has been hanged in Northern Ireland since 1942, when Tom Williams, leader of a six-man unit who killed a police officer, was singled out for execution, his five colleagues being reprieved. Even at a time when there was little support for the IRA, Williams's execution provoked extraordinary demonstrations, the papers reporting one group of women singing 'God Save the King' outside the prison, another group praying across the road.

This time, it would not be rosaries and the Royal Anthem, but months of sustained demonstrations and violence which would make the security services long for the days of Bobby Sands. And because the United Nations Civil and Political Rights Covenant, ratified by the United Kingdom, specifically bans the execution of those under 18 and of pregnant women, any terrorist organisation finding itself short of candidates for martyrdom would not be slow to select for active service those who could plead their belly or their age should they come to trial.

If the political problems of reintroducing executions in Northern Ireland are great, so, too, are the legal difficulties. Under the Emergency Provisions Act, 'scheduled' offences are tried in single-judge, no-jury courts. Adding lay assessors would do nothing to mitigate the effect of allowing a non-jury court to impose a death sentence. Even on the mainland, where juries survive, the majority verdict introduced in 1967 would make it possible to hang a prisoner whom one or two members of the jury did not believe guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

The Dublin government has already made representations to the British authorities about the effects of death penalty legislation on any political initiatives in Ireland. But politically motivated murders are not confined to the Irish, and the British government would find itself vulnerable to international retaliation, particularly in the Middle East, if foreign nationals were hanged in London.

The most comprehensive study of the death penalty in Britain remains the report of the Royal Commission in 1953, which unanimously concluded that any attempt to distinguish capital from non-capital murder would prove unworkable, and that there was no statistical evidence to show that abolition of the death penalty had increased the rate of homicide, or that its restoration had ever led to a fall.

The claims made for the death penalty's deterrent effect have always rested more on an obstinate belief that it must be so, rather than on any rational proof. In 1810, when Sir Samuel Romilly introduced his annual Bill to abolish the death penalty for shoplifting, the Lord Chief Justice told the Lords: 'Were the terror of death to be removed, shops would be liable to unavoidable losses from depredations and, in many instances, bankruptcy and ruin must become the lot of honest and laborious tradesmen.' Every debate on the death penalty has produced the same argument.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION'S conclusions on the deterrence effect were confirmed by a 1968 international study carried out for the United Nations which concluded that 'where the murder rate is increasing, abolition does not appear to hasten the increase; where the rate is decreasing, abolition does not appear to interrupt the decrease; where the rate is stable, the presence or absence of capital punishment does not appear to affect it'.

That study accelerated international moves for the complete abolition of the death penalty in peacetime. Although the 1953 European Human Rights Convention specifically authorises capital punishment, the more recent Civil and Political Rights Covenant imposes strict conditions on its use and encourages states to accept abolition. The Council of Europe has already obtained the signatures of 13 Western European states (including, within the EEC, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Spain) to a new Convention Protocol which would abolish the death penalty except in times of war. (International human rights lawyers generally agree that the conflict in Northern Ireland does *not* constitute a state of war.)

Reagan's America, however, has held out. Only eight days ago, the Supreme Court upheld a death penalty imposed in the State of Georgia on Alpha Stephens, an escaped prisoner already serving a sentence for murder. The decision is particularly significant since it was the Supreme Court decision to strike down Georgia's death penalty law in 1972 which almost completely suspended executions in the USA. But the Court has never ruled that the death penalty is itself unconstitutional, although they have rejected systems of discretionary sentencing which ensured that over half the prisoners executed in the United States were black.

Following a series of Supreme Court judgments on the acceptability of 'guided discretion' sentencing – in which judge or jury are required to find specific aggravating factors before imposing the death penalty – a majority of states have restored capital punishment. In January this year, Massachusetts became the 37th death penalty state, in a law rushed through after a referendum to amend the state constitution by a Governor who described the new law as his 'proudest legacy to the Commonwealth'. With over a thousand men and women in Death Row, a spokesman for the Department of Justice has predicted that the country will witness in 1983 and 1984 a spate of executions unparalleled since the Depression.

The death penalty will probably be defeated in the Commons next month. But if the vote is as narrow as most observers predict, we can expect a British movement of hangers to go on trying for the next five years. □

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed (on postcards, please).

☐ Three schoolgirls have chosen to re-sit their art O-level examination after a teacher entered their examination room and took a bite from their still life model, a stick of celery. – *Guardian* (Janet Mearns)

☐ Sentencing her, the judge said: 'It is in your own interests very much that you should understand that if you go around biting police officers, an offence that is far too prevalent nowadays, you lose your liberty.' – *The Times* (Simon Gold)

☐ Also on the shopping list was some Brussels paté, which Mrs Thatcher viewed with concern. 'I hope there's no garlic in it,' she said. – *Sunday People* (G. Moor)

☐ A tortoise, sent out on election night with a 'Vote Tory' sticker on its shell, has not reappeared at the home of its owner. – *Daily Mirror* (Nigel Smith)

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DIARY

Brian Sedgemore

Denis Healey's description of the Parliamentary Labour Party as 'a warm barrel of spit' aptly sums up the soggy atmosphere that hangs over its proceedings. The private discussion by the PLP on the Queen's Speech was as incoherent and uninspiring as the Speech itself. The public response of the PLP has led one member to refer to it as 'an irrelevant rabble'. The criticism is not hyperbolic, as three incidents testify. At 6 o'clock on the first day of the Queen's Speech (that's barely four hours after the start of the new Session), there was not one Labour MP in the Chamber of the House of Commons who was willing and able to speak on the issues facing our country. Yet there was no shortage of Members downstairs drinking tea, or upstairs participating in caucuses that will no doubt shape the future of the Labour Party, but not, as things are developing, the future of the country. Conscious maybe of its own impotence, the Shadow Cabinet then decided that there will be no scrutiny of government actions through Select Committees until the autumn. In the torpor of their wisdom they've refused to appoint any Labour Members to the Committees on the ground that they'd like to get Labour's elections for the Leader and the Shadow Cabinet out of the way first. To compound it all, backbench Members of the PLP seem to be suggesting – partly out of loyalty to Tam Dalyell and partly because in the general confusion any suggestion seems better than no suggestions – that Labour's attack on Thatcher in the coming weeks should centre on the sinking of the *Belgrano*. Thatcher would surely like nothing more.

○

The Shadow Cabinet elections could well prove more interesting than the Leadership election. Its membership unchanged for two years, the Shadow Cabinet, and its poor performance, is being seen as a major factor in the defeat at the polls. There's talk in the bars and tea-rooms (it's an absolute rule of the Club that nothing said in the tea-room should be quoted or attributed) of ditching Brynmor John (spokesperson, I am told, on social security matters), Stan Orme (industry), Eric Varley (employment), and Merlyn Rees (overlord on industry and employment) on the grounds that they lack the professional skills needed by modern politicians and have proved unable to communicate successfully with the public, either directly or on radio or TV. Eric Varley seems to be everyone's favourite skittle. 'Varley made Norman Tebbit credible. Five years ago Tebbit was a joke. These last two years he's been given a free run by Eric' said one North West MP. 'Boring and grey – the lot of them' was a view from the Midlands. When I put it to a middle-of-the-road (whoops, sorry, I mean right-wing) Northern MP that perhaps he was being a bit unfair to colleagues who had served well on Labour's front bench, he replied: 'A Party which is in desperate straits can't afford to be sentimental. The trouble is that the Left votes for the soft Right and the Right votes for the worst people on the Left. You can see the result for yourself.'

○

Informed sources tell me Labour's Chief Whip Michael Cocks could be facing a four-way fight in the autumn when he comes up for re-election. His opponents are likely to be Terry Davis, Martin Flannery and Peter Snape. Two of them have declared an interest. There's general agreement that in the last Parliament the Chamber of the House of Commons lost much of its importance. Some blame Labour's Whips and accuse them of conspiring with Tory Whips to get the government's business through, or more negatively of not putting up a fight. Certainly all-night sessions were few and far between. Some blame the dispiriting attitude of backbench Labour MPs. Others say that 're-selection' sent MPs scurrying back to their constituencies to cover their backs when they should have been in the House. A few point to the growing importance of Select Committees and suggest that no one should bemoan the decline of the Chamber as a place for gasbags and windbags. The serious point is that, if understanding of what's happening is the beginning of wisdom, the sooner Labour MPs find out the quicker they'll be able to deal with the mess they find themselves in. More than Michael Cocks's future is at stake.

○

It's been said that Labour MPs form the most sophisticated electorate in the world. So they should, given the amount of time they spend talking about elections. The Tribune Group is giving its members a free vote in the Leadership election, whereas the Campaign Group (that's real left-wing MPs) is opting, with the severest possible reservations and providing he removes some ambiguities concerning his alleged support of 'one person, one vote' for elections in the Party, for Eric Heffer. Distrust of Neil Kinnock has directed a number of MPs' minds towards Eric. The Campaign Group hopes to muster a big vote for Eric in the constituencies, using members of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy as their footsloggers. Meanwhile the four candidates for the Leadership are all delicately walking the tight-rope of appearing to conduct their campaigns as much in the interests of the Party as in their own. Thus it is that Roy Hattersley, Peter Shore and Eric Heffer can be seen in huddled conversation (how small Peter is compared with the two juggernauts) about whether they should or should not appear on TV and if so under what conditions. True grit Roy is delightfully frank. 'If I think appearing on a programme will help my campaign, I appear. If I think it will damage my campaign, I refuse.' Eric is against giving the media any chance to distort the messages, or use the election to create the appearance of Party disunity. He'd like to see the NEC ban media appearances. I was surprised therefore to see him sneak in an appearance on Channel 4 on Sunday. Peter is weighing the pros and cons of the argument carefully. While Neil Kinnock, as befits the front runner, has announced that he will not appear on radio or TV with any of his rivals. He's doing this, so his campaign manager Robin Cook told the Tribune Group, 'for the sake of Party unity'. Alas for Robin, the innocent look on his face as he spoke was slowly invaded by a surreptitious leer.

ROGER WOODIS

One hand held up in horror

While condemning apartheid as 'morally wrong' and 'impossible to maintain', Mr Lawrence Eagleburger, US Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, opposes those 'who would have our firms disinvest' in South African companies.

A brutal type of government
That fills us with abhorrence
Is hardly one to be maintained for long;
But a wish to serve the President
('I'm banking on you, Lawrence.')
Means balancing the claims of right and
wrong.

When speaking of morality,
The need to love your neighbour
Suggests another lesson we should learn:
In terms of practicality,
The lowest cost of labour,
With God's assistance, yields the best
return.

It may not be defensible
To praise judicial murder
Or yawn at broken bodies in a cell,
But it is far more sensible
To have your Eagleburger
And close your eyes while eating it as well.

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Testament of terror

Martha Gellhorn, journalist and novelist, has recently returned from El Salvador. She began her remarkable career in the 1930s, reporting on the Great Depression. She was an uncompromisingly honest war correspondent in Spain, China, Europe and then Vietnam

PRESIDENT REAGAN once described the Vietnam catastrophe as 'that noble war'. Recently he has called Somoza's guardsmen, again killing their compatriots under CIA auspices, 'freedom fighters'. Now he speaks eloquently of 'preserving freedom' in El Salvador for which more hundreds of millions of dollars are required. Salvadoran freedom is to be preserved in the tested Vietnam style. Lavish military aid, military training, land reform, elections and finally 'pacification'. Land reform and elections are meant to impress Americans. They are regarded in Salvador with contempt as frauds.

Again US policy knows what is best for others, in the US national interest, while knowing nothing of the others, their history, culture, daily life and bitter needs. All Americans do not suffer from amnesia or worse. It took ten years for American public opinion to stop the Vietnam war; this time it is moving faster. Meanwhile President Reagan steps up his earnest rhetoric of deception and alarm and weapons and money flow to the Salvadoran government and Green Berets move into neighbouring Honduras. A young Salvadoran lawyer said: 'Reagan only prolongs the agony but we will win'. Yes; but the agony is horrifying and to prolong it is a disgrace for the American people.

El Salvador is slightly larger than Wales and even more beautiful and mountainous, blessed with a benign climate, fertile soil, lakes, rivers and magical trees. A country like a garden, a rural society, where most of the five million inhabitants live in destitution. For 162 years Salvador has been ruled by and for an oligarchy of landowners and its allied military. The last collected statistics in 1971 show how this works. Eight per cent of the top citizens received 50 per cent of the national income. Twenty thousand farm properties occupied 75 per cent of the land, leaving the rest for 330,000 small farms. Sixty-five per cent of the rural population had become landless seasonal labourers.

There was no peaceful way to change this permanent greedy imbalance of wealth and opportunity. Elections were a sham, ballot boxes invariably stuffed to suit the ruling caste, the swindle enforced by the military. Orderly protest marches ended in massacres by the police. Strikes were broken by the army, strikers shot and imprisoned. The majority of the Salvadoran people could live without hope or rebel. Misery is not a synonym for 'communist subversion'. The true begetters of this civil war are successive brutal Salvadoran governments.

By now there is no pretence of law. Salvador is ruled by terror alone. The people have no protection except the Salvadoran Catholic Church, a moral and humanitarian support for which the Church pays in the death toll of its clergy. Doctors, nurses, medical students are murdered for giving their professional help to the poor. Rule by terror threatens anyone and everyone apart from those who use terror and rely on it. Nobody needs to tell you 'there is great fear in this country'. You can feel it.

In Saigon, I doubted that the Embassy Americans and the headquarters officers ever went anywhere, ever saw what real life was like for the Vietnamese who were also having their freedom preserved. Why didn't these privileged Americans visit the refugee hovels and the hospitals full of women and children wounded by American weapons and the orphanages and the *asiles* that sheltered the starving aged, the shell-shocked insane and the abandoned newborn? I had the same doubts in San Salvador. A few blocks from the grey concrete fortress of the American Embassy, in the shady backyard of the Diocesan office, there is a tin shack, the home of the Salvadoran Commission of Human Rights. It is a good place to get an overall view of what preserving freedom means for ordinary Salvadorans.

'The families of victims are victims too'

Network

You can read random selections from hundreds of sworn accounts of atrocity. You can study photo albums of the murdered. You can also have illuminating conversations with small sturdy brown-skinned women, instantly likeable in clean, faded cotton dresses with their black hair bobbed on top of their heads. The women are relatives of victims who come here, despite the hazard, to testify, to ask advice, to collect a weekly gift of flour, to talk. On my brief visit to Salvador, I was amazed by the trust of those who have most to fear.

For instance: I stopped a scrawny woman who was carrying a plastic bag of flour on her head. For her family? She has no family left except her mother and three of her brother's children. She is 47 years old and two years ago she had three brothers and an only child, exceptional here, a pregnant girl of 25. One by one they disappeared. She took me behind the shack to show me what had been done to her because she dared ask the police about her oldest brother, then her daughter. Her left breast was sliced down to the nipple, she had a deep stab wound on her shoulder and her head. 'They all raped me. Afterwards they pushed a flashlight up me. I am broken inside. I walk badly.' That was for her eldest brother. She lifted her dress quickly to reveal a long cut straight down her belly, other scars. 'They thought I was dead, they left me for dead.' That was when she tried to find out about her daughter. She had given no sign of self pity, but said with sudden tears: 'Imagine, a girl of 25, pregnant.' When the second brother disappeared, her mother, unable to accept the loss in silence, returned to their village with her youngest son. Days later, her mother found the decapitated body of her last son seven kilometres from the village.

It was a chance encounter; she was no different from any of the other women collecting flour.

AS WARS GO this one is minor so far, sporadic attacks with relatively light casualties on both sides. The guerrillas are destroying bridges, dams, pylons, factories, crops, striking at the wealth of the ruling caste. The real war is waged on the defenceless population by the government's security forces. Although the security forces have American planes, helicopters, bombs, mortars, machine guns, splendid rifles and unlimited ammunition, they are not very successful against the guerrillas, but hideously successful against the citizens – the Church estimates 35-45,000 unarmed civi-

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lian dead since 1979.

The National Police, the Treasury Police, the National Guard and the Army are the official security forces, unleashed on the people. A guess would be 12,000 men, maybe more. They are aided by an ominous body called ORDEN, some 100,000 strong, vicious peasant vigilantes paid to denounce, spy, provoke for reprisals, murder. 'They wear sombreros and kill with machetes.' The explanation for their treachery to their own kind is that they are rewarded with land, money, loot, and above all they are safe from the security forces. There are also the unofficial Squadrons of Death, men in civilian clothes and cars, roaming at night, special murder gangs. Finally CAIN are the trained torturers who operate inside the National Police Headquarters. All these maintain rule by terror and none has been punished for violations of human rights.

Nobody accuses the guerrillas of using torture nor do they slaughter citizens in the towns they briefly occupy or in the countryside. Wisely the guerrillas have treated captured conscript soldiers well and set them free. According to the Human Rights Commission, their record is exemplary. In Vietnam also it was clear who won the hearts and minds of the people. The guerillas are a merger of a dozen or more distinct groups from every occupation and background (high school students, market traders, peasants' union), with a dizzying range of initials to identify them. Only one of these is CP. The guerrillas and the Church and the small endangered humanitarian organisations demand 'dialogue', a just political solution to civil war. The Salvadoran government, representing five rightist parties and the White House view of communist subversion, refuses.

The young men and women, who form the Human Rights Commission, are wonderful kids, gentle, intelligent and heroic. They risk their lives to document exactly how terror works 'for the eyes of the people and democratic governments of the world'. The statistics of terror are hard to come by: to witness and report violations of human rights – the Salvadoran body count – is a subversive act. But reports are brought to the green-painted shack and to the Church: there must be a national grape-vine. I am using the Human Rights statistics, though they may well be incomplete.

Terror starts likes this: in the city, at any hour day or night, anywhere, at home, at work, waiting at a bus stop, a Salvadoran can be seized by armed men, uniformed or not, tied up, blindfolded, bundled into a car and driven to police headquarters. The reason for arrest is suspicion of being 'subversive'. Subversion is not defined. Practically, it means less than complete approval of the Salvadoran regime. After arrest, the Human Rights Commission divides victims into three categories: Disappeared, Captured, Assassinated.

'Disappeared' is total Kafka. Witnesses – family, friends, passersby – watch a person dragged off by armed security men. The frantic family, as always, searches for him, or her, at the several police headquarters. The security forces then deny that they ever seized this person. He or she has disappeared, become a non-person, and is never found again. The dreadful assumption is that the 'disappeared' has been tortured to death and the security forces took care to hide the body. They are not normally careful; they fling bodies on slum streets, on roads, or garbage dumps, anywhere. It would seem that the disappeared are the more important victims.

In February in the afternoon, armed men openly seized a doctor outside his surgery in a poor section of San Salvador. He was 35, father of three, universally admired as a man and a doctor, scheduled to be the next head of the dispersed, struggling medical school. An upper class woman doctor said, 'I know nothing of politics but that boy was of the most marvellous human quality'. His work was at the Maternidad, the appalling public hospital and among the poorest women, who revered him. He had been a founder of the Human Rights Commission and a member of Amnesty. Laterly, he had helped the American Medical Mission who came to Salvador – sad irony – to learn why so many of their colleagues had disappeared. The American doctors persuaded Senators and the State Department to ask the Salvadoran government to find him. But Roberto Martelli, 'of the most marvellous human quality', is lost without trace. This is one way to eliminate the generous minds that could lead and serve Salvador in the future. Disappearance began in 1966 – outstanding students at first – and increased year by year. In 1982, 346 men and women were wrenched out of life, invisibly.

'Captured' is a weird form of habeas corpus. After the arrest, the security forces will admit to the searching family that yes, this man, woman, boy, girl is held in their custody. What happens next is routine: the 'captured' are 'interrogated', tortured, as people are routinely fingerprinted and photographed in lawful jails. The captured should theoretically reappear in the two political prisons. In 1982, 766 people were captured, among them 104 students, 50 teachers, 18 professionals, three artists. I cite these numbers to underline the persecution of the intelligentsia, aptly defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as 'the part of a nation that aspires to independent thinking'. 'If you think here, you can die', said a staff member of Christian Legal Aid. Though 766 men and women of all ages and occupations were captured in 1982, the men in Mariona prison reported only 280 new arrivals, the women in Ilopango prison reported 45 newcomers. Habeas corpus does not mean the body will be safe or returned.

I WAS PROMISED entry to the women's prison and refused at the gate. Members of the American Medical Mission, to their surprise, spent hours interviewing the women prisoners from whom they learned the forms of 'interrogation' for every woman there. They were stripped and pawed, threatened with rape or raped, subjected to electric shocks or burning with acids, hung by the wrists, forced to stand naked for days, beaten (pregnant women not excepted), nearly suffocated under rubber masks. The American doctors saw scars from acid and other tortures; one woman had open sores from branding with red hot irons. Among the women, nearly half are of the intelligentsia. The men prisoners described similar treatment. One old man had his testicles surgically removed after ferocious beating.

After torture, every prisoner signs an unread confession. None knows what crimes they are supposed to have committed nor when, if ever, they will be brought to trial. This has been going on for four years. Women have given birth and are bringing up their babies in prison. The diet is minimal, unhealthy and unchanging; medical care is a token gesture. But these prisoners are the elite; they have been in the hands of the Salvadoran police, are alive and their families can visit them.

The families of victims are victims too. The families of anyone seized by the security forces gather up what they can carry at once and abandon their homes, taking refuge with friends or relatives. They fear reprisals if they stay where they can be found. This creates a class of concealed refugees, which by now numbers tens of thousands, living in worse than normal overcrowding, worse than normal poverty.

I talked to the wife of a 'captured' man – call him Juan, aged 41, seized in his high school where he had taught for 21 years. He belonged to ANDES, the teachers union, the last though much depleted pre-terror union. 262 of their members have been assassinated since 1978. Juan's take-home pay was $100 a month, a sidelight on local economics. Now his tired, soft-voiced, frightened wife is penniless and homeless, with three children, hiding in a relative's house: two women, seven teenaged children in two pitifully bare rooms. 'I can sew a little,' she said.

Juan's 'interrogation' was basic, almost a formality. For eight days he was kept alone, blindfolded, his hands tied behind his back, sleepless on a bench. He was kicked and hauled back if he fell from exhaustion. When they took off the blindfold his eyelids were stuck together and had to be medically opened. This does not count as torture. The interrogation began with beating: tied up, punched, kicked, or whipped and all the

MADAME BLAVATSKY

Why were, and are, so many people, by way of books and articles, so concerned to besmirch her reputation, to prove her a fraud, and to denigrate her works? Is it because they are afraid? Does what she had to say undermine the "authority" of our highest institutions? Is "orthodoxy" fearful of the searchlight of her encyclopaedic knowledge and powerful intellect? Is it that academic vested interest must discredit her to maintain its own position? You can only find this out by reading her works for yourself. *We suggest you would never be sorry* if you did!

Write to:

The Blavatsky Trust (B)

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Eric Piper/Syndication International

From the photo albums of the El Salvador Commission of Human Rights

time taunted and mocked, pride broken by pain. After this, for three days, Juan was given electric shocks in the region of the heart and lungs, on the abdomen, the feet and ears. A heavy industrial machine is used, a sticky unguent is applied to the skin before attaching metal pads. Though I have read detailed descriptions in the Human Rights files, I cannot imagine the convulsed paralysed body, the eyeballs burning, popping out, the screams. After six months, Juan still feels pain and noise in his ears. His wife says he is very thin, nervous and depressed.

'TORTURE in El Salvador has become customary as a method of work, considered natural and necessary by those who practise it.' (Salvadoran Commission of Human Rights.) The Gestapo introduced official torture into the modern world with great success. It has spread, poisonous filth, world-wide and made technical progress. The obscenities of CAIN surpass anything heard from Gestapo victims in Europe. Torture is the worst abomination of man and utterly condemns any government that sanctions it. El Salvador is a member of the United Nations and party to the Charter of Human Rights. Has the United Nations gone out of business? European officials rightly denounced psychiatric torture in the Soviet Union. Why keep obsequiously silent about El Salvador?

'Assassinated.' In 1982, regarded as a good year, better than the preceding three, 5,840 mutilated corpses of men and women, boys and girls, were found, dumped everywhere throughout El Salvador. Of these, peasants were the majority. Few peasants were 'captured', only eight 'disappeared' in 1982. The method for peasants is immediate butchery in villages and fields. Peasant refugees tell how the army, or ORDEN, or the National Guard, came into their village, killing, before they stole the animals, looted and burned the houses. This is how refugees are made: an estimated 300,000 outside the country, 200,000 inside it, but the process is never-ending. Peasants are uprooted, killed, because they are Romero Catholics, *Catolicos*. They believe what their murdered Archbishop taught: misery is not decreed by God, but made by man. This is revolutionary communism to the Salvadoran government. But then, Jesuit priests are considered communists and live in danger.

Women, innumerable children, old men crowd into makeshift refugee encampments. They have all seen peasants assassinated. A sample: a pouter pigeon of a woman who has lived for two years with 1,200 other peasant refugees on the dusty playing fields of the Catholic Seminary. 'It was ORDEN. We heard them coming. We ran to hide in the trees. But my daughter was eight months pregnant, she could not run fast enough. They caught her on the path. They cut open her stomach with a machete and pulled out the child and cut it in half. She was 17 years of age. I saw with my own eyes. With my own eyes. Then they stole everything we had worked for and burned our houses.'

We learned that President Reagan was distressed by the photographs of the Phalange victims in the Beirut Palestinian camps. He is morally obliged to see the Human Rights albums of assassinated Salvadorans. These people did not die quickly. Many faces are covered in blood below the eyes. ('We think they do this with rifle butts.') Some have been strangled. Some are decapitated, the head beside the corpse. A naked boy, lying on his face, has long deep open stab slashes on his legs. A naked woman, also on her face, is riddled with bullet wounds through the lower half of her body; her nakedness presumes rape but that is commonplace for women. There is a gruesome statuary of eight entwined faceless bodies, burned down to nothing but smooth white fat. I studied specially the photos of those killed this January, the month when President Reagan certified that human rights reform in El Salvador warranted more military aid, although 672 Salvadorans were murdered in that month alone.

We free worlders elect our governments freely, so we are responsible for what they do in our name. If governments were better, wiser, more in touch with real life, citizens would not have to spend so much time educating and restraining them. Nadezdha Mandelstam, survivor of another tyranny, gave the best advice to citizens: 'If you can do nothing else you must scream.' Weary work but essential. We Americans have to scream our government out of El Salvador and well away from Nicaragua too; quagmires spread. We really cannot become known in the world as a nation that interferes crazily and cruelly in the lives of small brown-skinned people who never harmed us. □

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POLAND

John Paul's journey

Amit Roy observed the Pope at work

Warsaw

THE POPE'S VISIT to Poland was very much an American show. Over a third of the 1,000 foreign newsmen who came to cover the eight day trip were American, many of Polish origin. This reinforced the impression that the Polish crisis was a matter concerning no one but the Americans and Russians, whom cynics in Poland accuse of being willing to fight each other 'down to the last Pole'.

Even the Pope, on two occasions, sounded as if he had come with a script written by President Reagan, by insisting that the Polish authorities improve their relations 'above all with the US'. 'Well,' explained a veteran American television correspondent, 'the Pope knows that there are between 10 million and 20 million Americans of Polish origin in the US of A.'

The Poles, too, were behaving like Americans by extracting payment from journalists in US dollars: $20 merely for accreditation; $70 for access to telephones and telex (calls extra); $220 for a place on a bus; $50 for transfer from hotel to airport; $45 a night for a shared room in a students' hostel ($112 a night for a single at the Warsaw Inter-Continental); $20 for use of typewriters; $90 a day for inexperienced interpreters. These were just the basics. No, you could not hire interpreters privately. And *tak* (yes) American Express would do nicely.

A reporter from a British religious publication, who had covered eight of the Pope's 18 foreign tours, did not consider the charges just excessive. 'It's a rip-off,' he fumed. The cost effectively excluded journalists from non-western nations from covering the year's top Polish story. The guides kept announcing: 'Western journalists will now go on to their bus . . .' Not, 'Foreign journalists. . .'

However, one should recognise that a principal ambition of General Wojciech Jaruzelski's government was to win friends in the American media – or, at least, to reduce the level of hostility. In this, it succeeded. I asked several Polish-American journalists coming 'home' for the first time how their preconceptions of Poland under martial law matched the reality. They all said: 'Things are different, better than we thought.'

Of course, I had the feeling they did not say this in their copy, exaggerating the strength of pro-Solidarity demonstrations or the number of 'Solidarnosc' banners. At Warsaw Stadium, for example, in a crowd of 150,000, I counted only ten such banners.

What has happened in Poland is that Solidarity underground and radicals are now a dwindling band. At the other end of the spectrum are the Communist hardliners, who think Jaruzelski has been too soft in cracking down on Solidarity. In between lie the vast majority of the 36 million Poles.

THE GOVERNMENT'S analysis is that worker discontent can be contained without force if living standards can be improved. What the Pope's visit has probably achieved is to buy the government breathing space for another two years.

One evening, at the Holy Shrine of Jasna Gora in Czestochowa, I asked a priest at one of the Pope's masses whether he thought it odd how Church and Communist government seemed so hand in glove. He took a long time to mumble an evasive reply, but the woman journalist interpreting remarked in a spontaneous aside: 'I definitely think it's odd.'

But it is not odd when one understands that Solidarity's battle is not that of the Church. The latter's aims are far more long-term, as was evident from the Pope's 23 sermons and homilies. The most powerful of these was to the industrial workers at Katowice, where he declared that the right to form trade unions was God given, not conferred by the state. In Warsaw, he urged the authorities '*gradually* to put into effect' (our italics) the agreements reached with workers in August 1980, in Szczecin, Gdansk and Silesia. This, the Pope hopes, will keep alive the *spirit* of Solidarity, if only Jaruzelski can be persuaded to talk to 'the representatives of labour'.

Note, he did not stipulate Solidarity, or its former leader Lech Walesa. Whatever Walesa might say – last Sunday, he responded to speculation begun by the Vatican's *L'Osservatore Romano* by insisting: 'I have to lead. I have to achieve what we planned' – the Pope must have recognised that, for the time being, Jaruzelski will not or cannot hold 'dialogue' with Walesa, the symbol of Solidarity.

One can be fairly confident that Jaruzelski will soon lift martial law, possibly on 22 July, Poland's National Day. It won't mean much, because martial law was already 'suspended' on 13 December 1982, exactly a year after its imposition. Even so, he will have to convince the hardliners in the Communist Party.

What the Pope was doing throughout his visit was to plant ideas into the minds of his countrymen. He spoke of 'a thousand years of Polish culture'. In Wroclaw, where Solidarity had the most loyal following after Gdansk, its birthplace, he declared: 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. I bring my Solidarity and that of the Church.'

There was a revealing remark in his speech on arrival in Warsaw. He was sorry he could not go everywhere in Poland 'this time' – meaning that he hoped to come again.

He has a strange, almost mystical power, this Polish Pope. I saw him exercise it last year in Argentina, in its darkest hour. Even if the former Cardinal of Krakow does not return to his native land, his message will be remembered and cherished by the millions and millions of his countrymen who saw and heard him. That has been Karol Wojtyla's real conquest. □

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Uninvited Chartists

Jan Kavan and William Shawcross on the Congress

THE WORLD CONGRESS For Peace and Life against Nuclear War ended harmoniously in Prague on Sunday, with the delegates being bade farewell by a genial Dr Gustav Husak, who was brought to power by the Soviet tanks of 1968.

Gathered together in the hall had been happy and enthusiastic delegates from all around the world. Missing, however, were the spokespeople of Charter 77, the Czechoslovak human rights movement. They had been refused admission.

On Wednesday 22 June the two CND observers and several delegates from other countries were able informally to meet Charter 77 leaders. A joint statement stressing the link between peace and human rights was agreed between Charter 77 and the West German Greens. From the morning of the following day all Charter 77 spokespeople were put under strict surveillance. Later, they met about 20 delegates from Britain, Holland and Germany in Hvezda Park. The meeting was soon broken up by the police when Western journalists began to interview some of the Charter spokespeople.

At the end of May this year, Charter 77 asked officially to be accredited to the conference. Since there was no reply to their request, two Charter spokespeople, Jan Kozlik and Anna Marvanova, went along to the fifth floor of the Secretariat to see Comrade Kupec. They were told he was at a meeting on the first floor and that he would be free in 15 minutes; then, not until late into the night. The meeting in fact had ended after 15 minutes and two men left it. When they saw Kozlik and Marvanova, they started to run down the corridor. Kozlik ran faster and asked which was Mr Kupec.

One of them replied that Comrade Kupec was not in the building. The spokespeople went back up to Kupec's office – and who should come in but the man with whom they had been speaking downstairs: Comrade Kupec. He told them to make an appointment by telephone; refused to give them the number; then locked himself in his office.

Later, the Secretariat promised meetings with Charter. Later still, it cancelled them. The only positive response to the Chartists was a series of threats from the police that they should keep away from the peace-loving delegates and that even handing over a

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letter to the World Peace Assembly would be clear 'provocation'. Nonetheless, they did so – although the foreign press paid little attention to its contents.

CHARTER 77 STATED its belief that:

> True peace will not be reached without true trust and true trust will not exist as long as the particular interests of various establishments play a bigger role in politics than the true well being of all people. But this basic responsibility for mankind . . . will probably not win its place in the considerations of governments and especially the super-powers until millions of ordinary people force them to accept it . . . We recognise the peace movement as one of the attempts to bring about an essential change in the orientation of humanity today. Therefore we are open to dialogue and co-operation with the peace movement, welcome it and feel bound to it with the same basic desire for a better world.

Charter 77 also made a specific proposal to the Congress – that its resolution include an appeal to all governments to publicise not only their own proposals, arguments and statistics, but also those of the other side. Last Sunday, the delegates in Prague did not seem to be paying much attention to this modest proposal. Nor was there any response to the appeal for the release of human rights activist Petr Uhl (who is serving his ninth year in prison) and Ladislav Lis, who did more than anyone else to promote a dialogue with the western peace movement and was arrested in January.

The Charter spokespeople have never pretended that the relationship of 'peace' to 'human rights' is straightforward. A recent 200-page dossier compiled by Charter 77 includes open letters to the western peace movement; an essay by Dubcek's foreign minister in 1968, Jiri Hajek; contributions by leading Christian thinkers such as Ladislav Hejdanek and Josef Zverina and a challenging open letter from Jaroslav Sabata (a former senior party official and head of the psychology department at Brno University) to E. P. Thompson. Most of these documents are available in a booklet *Voices From Prague**.

Thompson has already been in open correspondence (published in *NS* 24 April 1981, 17/24 December 1982 and 18 February 1983) with another Czechoslovak dissident, who wrote under the pseudonym Vaclav Racek. Racek tends to see the western peace movement as naïve and unable to understand the true nature of Soviet and East European totalitarianism. The dialogue between Racek and Thompson reached a dead end.

Sabata's views are more complex. He says that the western independent peace movement 'has intrinsically the same aims as ourselves – but it still needs an effort on both sides to keep providing evidence of this fact'. He argues that there is already an incomplete 'trialogue' between Charter 77, the Czech government and the western peace movement. It must be made complete and become 'an element in a full-bodied all European dialogue'.

Nonetheless, Sabata too insists that members of the western peace movement should not 'relegate the struggle for civil rights in favour of the supposedly all-important universal and supreme right to life . . . The phrase that no rights will survive a nuclear war is repeated all too glibly . . . The right to life implies a life of dignity'.

Sabata concludes by calling on all the different groups and movements in the East and West 'capable of contributing to a major change towards democratic peace' to 'convert into a common denominator the struggle against the modernisation of NATO and the struggle against the violation of human rights' in Eastern Europe, and to formulate a joint 'long-term political strategy which would eventually lead to the abolition of the undemocratic legacy of the postwar social and political settlement and the unification of Europe.' □

* Voices From Prague *is available for £1.50 + 30p postage from Palach Press Ltd, PO Box 222, London WC2 H9RP.*

ITALY

Official opposition

John Eisenhammer analyses the strategy of the PCI

Rome

MANY BELIEVED THAT the issue of *lo strappo* – the break – with Moscow would rupture the Italian Communist Party (PCI). The effects of Berlinguer's dramatic announcement in January 1982 (reaffirmed in the central committee's congress document) that the evolutionary force of the Bolshevik revolution was exhausted, were awaited with excitement and trepidation all through the run-up to the PCI congress this March. But the PCI's strong consolidation of its position as Italy's second largest party is being taken as a resounding endorsement of the strategy.

Lo strappo is the fruit of long reflection on a 'third way'. The fact that it aroused, in the end, so little interest, resides in the major changes undergone by the party, particularly during the 1970s. Not only is the reality of the eastern bloc unacceptable to many, if not most in the PCI, but, more importantly, the very tradition, the symbols, the discourse, are of diminished relevance.

The old guard – the *vetero-comunisti* – made a determined effort to combat *lo strappo*, but to little effect. Led by Armando Cossutta, its amendments in the section and provincial congresses attracted at most ten to 15 per cent and, in the strongholds like Turin, Bologna and Genova, as little as three per cent.

The PCI has yet to find something with which to replace the defunct Historic Compromise. The return to opposition – to mobilisation in the factories and the *piazze* – failed to restore a sense of dynamism and purpose to a party whose main source of attraction during the '70s was the seeming imminence of its accession to office. The break with Moscow has lost significance because symbolism and ideology in general have lost significance. During the boom years of the mid-'70s, those who flocked into the PCI were less attracted by a glorious tradition and a faith, than by a party that was going places, that was going to get things done. The party's expansion brought with it important gains in local and regional government. Thousands of activists became mayors, administrators, councillors, managers.

In attempting to identify a viable strategy, the party has concentrated upon three issues. First, it has considered its relations with the Socialists (PSI). At present, these could hardly be worse, being characterised by rivalry, distrust and bitter polemic. Nonetheless, if the Communists are to win office, Socialist cooperation is indispensable. From total subordination (first to the Communists in the late '40s and '50s, then to the Christian Democrats (DC) in the '60s) the PSI has pursued, of late, a strategy of aggressive independence, attempting to turn its position at the fulcrum of Italian politics from a handicap into an asset. In its hands now lies the fate of the present DC government, and of a future Communist one. Many in the PCI are aware that being the undisputed leader of the opposition is a precarious situation if the party is not, also, a credible alternative government. If the PCI is ever to get into government, some sort of workable relationship will have to be found with the Socialists.

The second issue is that of internal reform, aimed particularly at Democratic Centralism. A system of organisation designed for a tight, homogeneous, revolutionary party is ill-equipped to satisfy the exigences of a mass *interclassista* and self-styled governing party. The requirements of managerial efficiency have taken precedence over the ability for ordered mobilisation and protest.

Finally, there is the problem of relations with the trade unions. The most recent sign of their uneasy state has been the polemic between PCI leader Berlinguer and Luciano Lama, the general secretary of the Communist-dominated CGIL (the largest labour confederation). The background to the polemic is the agreement signed on 22 January between the unions and the employers on labour costs and the hotly disputed sliding scale mechanism. The PCI greeted the agreement with barely disguised bad grace, less because it eroded the important advantages won by Italian workers in the late '60s and early '70s than because it signified an attempt by the government, management and unions to tackle the economic crisis without the Communists. At a time when the PCI is trying to give shape to its democratic alternative and new development strategy, stressing its indispensability for the successful running of the country, the unions' efforts were unwelcome. Berlinguer's remarks that the unions should stick to shop floor issues and leave politics to the parties provoked a bitter response. □

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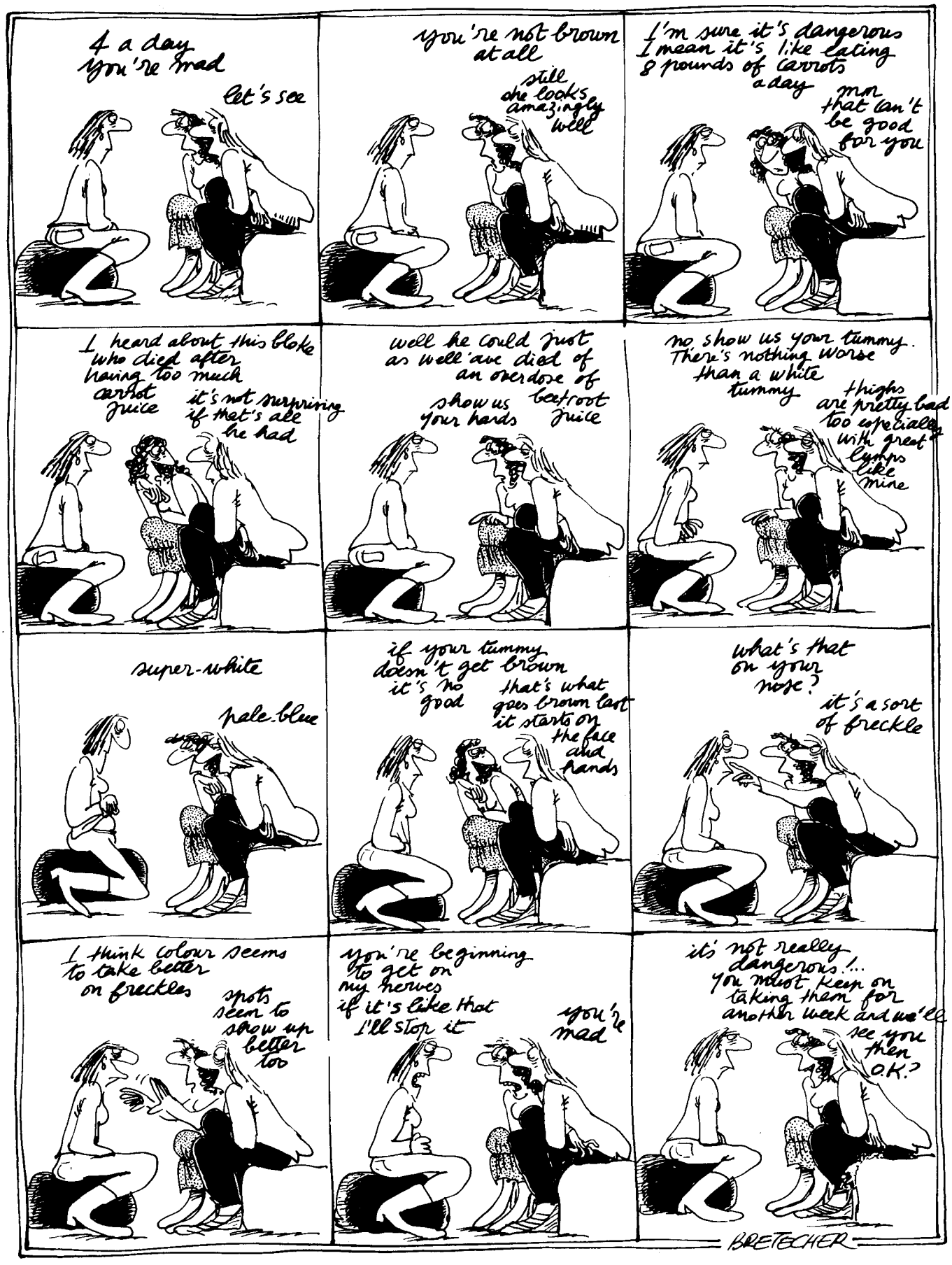
BRETECHER

Brown Pills


4 a day you're mad
let's see
you're not brown at all
still she looks amazingly well
I'm sure it's dangerous I mean it's like eating 8 pounds of carrots a day
mm that can't be good for you
I heard about this bloke who died after having too much carrot juice
it's not surprising if that's all he had
well he could just as well've died of an overdose of beetroot juice
show us your hands
no show us your tummy. There's nothing worse than a white tummy
thighs are pretty bad too especially with great lumps like mine
super-white
pale blue
if your tummy doesn't get brown it's no good
that's what goes brown last it starts on the face and hands
what's that on your nose?
it's a sort of freckle
I think colour seems to take better on freckles
spots seem to show up better too
you're beginning to get on my nerves if it's like that I'll stop it
you're mad
it's not really dangerous!... you must keep on taking them for another week and we'll see you then O.K.?
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

Peace and the election

Ann Holmes, London W2

Edward Thompson's article (*NS* 24 June) worried me considerably in its analysis both of voting patterns at the General Election and of CND's own activities.

On the basis of the 1979 General Election results, Labour needed just over a 1 per cent swing from the Tories to gain Calder Valley: the Liberals needed substantially more than to double their vote. The much increased majority of the now Tory MP is largely attributable to previous Labour supporters voting Liberal.

As the Labour candidate, I stated both my own and the Party's opposition to cruise and Trident in meetings, leaflets and my election address. To say the Liberal candidate kept a 'low profile' on peace issues must qualify as the understatement of the year. David Shutt refused to attend the public meeting called by CND (to which all three candidates were invited) and stated in his election address that whilst the Geneva talks continued it 'would be unwise to reach a final decision on the siting of cruise missiles'.

I find it incredible that Edward Thompson can nonetheless argue that there was a choice between two 'peace' candidates. Far from the anti-Tory vote necessarily being a 'peace' vote, I know that for some the switch from Labour to the Alliance was seen as a means of voting against a non-nuclear defence policy.

Taking the energies of those who could have been working for the election of a Government opposed to cruise and Trident, all CND was able to do was raise the case both for and against nuclear disarmament in general. It was not able to supply the legs and voices on the doorsteps to provide the arguments and the answers.

What happened in Calder Valley was that CND 'conducted an exceptionally active campaign' in raising the general issue; the press and the Tory candidate were predictably effective in exploiting it; the Liberal candidate deftly avoided it and hard-pressed Labour activists were left to persuade the better part of 72,000 voters!

I do not think I am unique in having fought for a constituency where I have no doubt that CND activities directly and unnecessarily assisted in bringing about some of the increase in the Tory majority – a view which I believe is shared by the Tory MP.

Mike Harskin, National League of Young Liberals, London SW1

Thank you for printing E. P. Thompson's article (*NS* 24 June) which rightly gives some credit to the Liberal activists' rebellion against our leadership's sell-out on defence, and especially cruise.

He can add to his list the Young Liberals who at the start of the campaign pointed out that Liberal policy has more in common with CND than with the Alliance manifesto, which he rejected.

Your own Peter Kellner chose to belittle the YLs as irrelevant, and now perhaps he would like to revise his narrow, partisan view so that we can all work together to translate the majority for peace in the country into a majority in the Commons.

Or are our plans for worker control of industry, decentralisation to parish level where possible and an end to national frontiers and rivalries too radical for the Labour movement?

At the controls

Brian Lapping, Granada Television, London W1

Brian Sedgemore's diary note (*NS* 24 June) about Lord Devlin and Granada Television was full of inaccuracies.

1) It was not 'Lord Devlin's idea to set up an independent judicial inquiry into Franks and his report'. It was Granada Television's proposal to him.

2) It is not true that 'Granada TV agreed to giving editorial control to Lord Devlin'. Granada TV never agrees to give editorial control to anybody.

Limited power of the press?

Keith R. Hotten, London SW15

No one would deny Donald Matheson's general point (Letters 24 June) that if Fleet Street had been attacking the Tories for the past four years the result on 9 June may have been different.

What those who take this line of argument in their exegesis of Labour's defeat have to explain, is how Labour governments have ever been elected in the past.

It is an inescapable feature of democratic politics that the electorate will be subject to the forces of competing agencies which will generate a set of 'concerns'. The major error of the left's approach seems to me to be in their belief that there are a set of fixed and underlying concerns which are 'distorted' by the media.

Any set of electoral concerns will have both historical 'depths', and their antecedence in a variety of (often competing) ideological apparatuses, and thus will always be dependent upon a number of different forces.

In this sense there can be no underlying concerns, distorted or otherwise, but only specific political conditions of existence which the Labour Party, and particularly those on the left, must face up to.

The existence of a right-wing press is only one element of those conditions which must be taken into account in the political calculations of those who, like me, wish to see the election of a left Labour Government. The media are clearly responsible for many myths which may damage Labour but nothing so damaging as the myth held by elements on the left that there is a mass base for socialism inherent in Britain today; the task for socialists is still to create that mass base.

I fear the failure to recognise this will be more damaging to Labour's chances than anything Fleet Street might conjure up.

Running scared

David Rose, Time Out, *London WC2*

I sympathise strongly with Anna Coote's observations (*NS* 24 June) on being jeered at while running. However, in my experience, this disagreeable abuse is often directed at men as well (though I suppose it could be that I look even more like a penguin than she does), albeit couched in less sexist language. Weekends are the worst, when I have sometimes found an apparently respectable and stately family group out walking the dogs all joining in at once. It seems to me that the origin of all this is simple guilt, and also fear: the jeerers know that really they too ought to take vigorous exercise, but have never got started (by far the hardest part). The jeers are based on pathetic, defensive self-justification on the part of fatties in terror of apocalypse arterio-sclerosis.

Kellner in the stocks

Sarah Ballarin, London N1

If Peter Kellner were to defect to the *Mail* or *Telegraph* as a few others have done before him, I'm sure they would receive him with open arms!

New Statesman readers have the right to expect *some form* of socialism in their leader writers – or am I wrong? If he goes on in this vein much longer, that really might force me to give up a subscription of some 25 years.

Monstrous regiment

S. T. Stukes, Norwich

The second half of *NS* 17 June contains four articles dealing directly with feminism as well as plugs from other female contributors.

Readers of the *New Statesman* must be quite conversant with the arguments concerning feminism by now and I, for one, will not have my views changed on the subject by a lot of nagging women. I shall just cease to buy your paper, which will be a pity after 45 years.

A literary review should be a review of current literature, not a vehicle for plugging its editor's views. Perhaps if you look at an old copy, when V. S. Pritchett was editor, you will get an idea of what I mean.

Little piggies

Hugh Bayley, London NW1

Francesca Klug and Paul Gordon's illuminating article about the Tory racists (*NS* 10 June) referred to the fascist-infiltrated organisation WISE (Welsh, Irish, Scottish and English). Given the Tory right's long standing anti-Irish sentiments, recently illustrated by the attempt to deny the vote to citizens of the Republic living in the UK, would it not be more accurate to call this organisation Scottish, Welsh, Irish (Northern) and English (SWINE)?

Ins and outs of the EEC

Fred Singleton, Ilkley, W. Yorks.

Your comment in the leader of 17 June that the case against British membership of the EEC rests on 'Little Englandism' ignores the internationalist case for withdrawal, which was the basis of our 1983 manifesto policy.

The Common Market, despite the pseudo-idealistic rhetoric of the Euro-fanatics, does not unite Europe. It helps to separate the ten West European members from the other 20 European countries, including the economically successful neutrals – Finland, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland – and the non-aligned group, including Yugoslavia, and from the members of Comecon.

There is no doubt that we could negotiate reasonable economic terms for withdrawal. All our ex-EFTA partners have agreements with the EEC, and since we left EFTA they have all increased their trade with the Common Market. The crucial issues in our relations with EEC are not economic, but political, as Hallstein pointed out at the time of Britain's first application, and as Gaitskell, Heath and even Thatcher have since admitted.

The Euro-elections will be upon us in less than a year. It is about time we started working out our strategy for them. Do we fight them? If so, on what platform? Do we decide soon, or drift along as in 1979 until we are panicked into action, and make another botched job of it?

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Phillip Whitehead

Eye of the storm

Finest Hour: Winston S. Churchill 1939-1941
MARTIN GILBERT *Heinemann* £20 & £15.95

In January 1941 Harry Hopkins sent back to Roosevelt a pen portrait of the British prime minister, then seven months in office. 'Churchill is the gov't in every sense of the word', he wrote. 'He controls the grand strategy and often the details – labour trusts him, the army, navy, air force are behind him to a man. The politicians and upper crust pretend to like him.' The passage could summarise Martin Gilbert's vast study of the man and the nation in crisis. No two years in a man's life can have been as comprehensively chronicled, day by day. The 'finest hour' was also the longest, and Churchill was always at the eye of the storm.

The great tidal waves of that storm – Norway, the fall of France, the Battle of Britain, the Greek and North African campaigns, the long and crafty wooing of Roosevelt, and the decision to aid Russia when it came under Nazi assault – carry the story along. Throughout these two years the fertility of Churchill's mind spawned memoranda on every subject. As First Lord he intervened in every aspect of defence strategy. As Prime Minister he could command and countermand: grand strategy and detail came alike to his pen. Interpreting the variations of 'Enigma' as the intelligence assessments came in, beating the magnetic mine and the German bombers' target radio beam, searching for new strategic diversions to escape from the 'intolerable shackles' of reactive defence; these were flanked by the guerrilla raids on his own ministers.

The detail is occasionally obsessive. Too many routine letters to Churchill are included, and assessments of him repeated more than once, but his own output was never boring, though sometimes capricious. The provision of gramophones in the Tube shelters, over-harsh sentences on firemen who had stolen whisky, opposition to meat rationing ('Almost all the food faddists I have ever known, nut-eaters and the like, have died young after a long period of senile decay . . .'); every minister came within range. So did diplomats and soldiers who spoke out of turn. When the Ambassador in Cairo criticised the diversion of supplies to Greece the response came not from the Foreign Secretary but from Downing Street: 'You should not telegraph at Government expense such an expression as "completely crazy" when applied by you to grave decisions taken by the Defence Committee . . .' He clamoured for action against military men tainted with slackness or defeatism – Mackesy at Narvik, North and Bevan at Gibraltar – as though he would personally have torn off their epaulettes.

From the fringes, he had pressed his case: widen the war, hit the enemy, look ahead to the production needs of the year after next. As Prime Minister he at last had a nation *en vedette*. He had to combat the crisis of military will in France, and the paralysis of political will in the United States during a presidential election year. In his first 55 days as premier, after a series of nightmare visits to the disintegrating French administration, he saw his principal ally stumble from the fight. As he flew home from Tours, with the memory of Pétain, Weygand and Paul Baudouin fresh in his mind, he must have known that their peers in calamity could have been found in Britain. From Halifax to Lloyd George, many of those he had known longest would have settled for a negotiated peace. Churchill would not, and remained vigilant against such talk. On 25 June 1940 he wrote to Halifax that R. A. Butler had been talking indiscreetly: 'It is quite clear to me from these telegrams and others that Butler held odd language to the Swedish Minister and certainly the Swede derived a strong impression of defeatism.' Butler denied it, and the records are not yet fully disclosed, but 'the suspicion of lukewarmness' hung over him thereafter.

While others sought exits, Churchill sought allies, any allies, to prolong and extend the war. His cajolery of the Americans was masterly, even when their greed for the last British gold reserves became indecent and it was clear that they would come into the war only if subject to a major military attack on themselves. His prejudices were laid aside for the duration. Labour was embraced, Ernest Bevin's conditions for entering the war cabinet accepted. The Duke of Windsor, upon whom he had doted to his disadvantage in pre-Abdication days, was roughly handled for his vanity and defeatism, and with reason. More profoundly, the man who had wished to strangle Bolshevism at its birth now moved to save it. Churchill had understood the Enigma decrypts clearly; Hitler meant to attack the Soviet Union. His response was instant, unqualified and unilateral. Russia would be helped. Eden, Cranborne and other Tories protested. They were brushed aside. Churchill broadcast that night, refusing to show Eden his text, that 'the Russian danger is our danger, and the danger of the United States, just as the cause of any Russian fighting for his hearth and home is the cause of free men and free peoples in every quarter of the globe'.

In extremis Churchill had the seeing eye. It was in this mood that he could say to Halifax and John Colville of the young men from outside the public school élite who had fought in the Battle of Britain, 'they have saved this country; they have the right to rule it', and that he would not lead a party or class struggle against his Labour colleagues after the war.

Camera Press

Churchill with allies Stalin and Truman

Later these things were forgotten, and he became a petulant partisan of class interests once more. But for a moment he caught and held the mood of a nation in crisis. His big decisions were the right ones, and the nation understood. A bystander remembered his visit to the destroyer *Churchill* off Iceland:

> I found Taff, a Rhondda valley pitman, next to me at the rail. 'There goes the bastard', he said in a voice full of venom, 'back to his bloody brandy'. Startled, I turned and looked at him. Taff whipped round, glared defiantly, and turned to the hatchway. 'And the best of bloody luck to him', he said as he disappeared.

It was the moment of rapport between Winston and Taff, unnecessary to romanticise, unlikely to recur, which made this the finest hour. □

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WAR
Stephen Brook

Artists, pastors and horses

Colours of War
ALAN ROSS *Cape* £12.50
Animals in War
JILLY COOPER *Heinemann* £6.95
God On Our Side: The British Padre in World War I
MICHAEL MOYNIHAN *Leo Cooper/Secker* £8.95

World War I generated images that confounded accepted notions of stirring combat, images of waste and loss as desolate as the muddy fields that were being fought over. Not surprisingly, the painting and poetry of World War I reflected and sustained this. World War II was less contentious: few doubted the justness of the cause. There was, of course, terrible destruction and suffering and death, but not the sense of futility that characterised the earlier war. War artists in 1939 reported to an official committee that commissioned specific projects; the function of those war artists was essentially documentary, and it's predictable that their work was rarely distinguished.

Alan Ross is well aware of this, and, in **Colours of War,** after appraising the handful of artists who produced work of lasting interest – Henry Moore, Sutherland, Paul Nash, Stanley Spencer – he canters briskly through a catalogue of mediocrity. There are some surprises – Anthony Gross's fluency and immediacy, Keith Vaughan's moving figure sketches – but these official artists mostly produced either competent illustration or lightweight vignettes: inoffensive, sometimes entertaining or illuminating, but hardly memorable.

By considering each artist in turn, Ross reinforces the monotony, and he pads his narrative with anecdote and quotation that are only remotely relevant. The idea of 'official war artist' had, by 1939, become peripheral. Their documentary function had been superseded by photography and cinematography, and, although Kenneth Clark, who headed the War Artists Advisory Committee and contributed an introduction to this book, tried to place artistic merit ahead of propaganda, the project was artistically compromised from the start. As Ross observes, the artists 'were to do with the war, but not in it'.

Jilly Cooper visits Sefton, the old horse injured in the Hyde Park bombing last year:

> As I put my arms round his neck, for a minute he rested his velvet whiskery chin against my shoulder. 'I'm sorry,' I whispered, 'for what's been done to you, and all the millions and millions of other horses down the ages.' And suddenly I understand the courage and philosophical acceptance that has sustained him and all the million others.

That's the Cooper style, and either you bounce along with it or you detest it. To her, animals are not dumb beasts but extensions of the family of man. She anthropomorphises as if there were no distinction to be made. Simultaneously she sentimentalises, and so diminishes her subject. 'Philosophical acceptance' is both nonsense and a mawkish reduction of the beast's dignity, which resides, surely, in the fact that it suffers uncomprehendingly.

Animals' unwitting suffering is also the source of the book's appeal, as she describes the creatures who have been used to oil the machinery of war, for transportation, haulage, message carrying, mine detection. There is something undoubtedly heartwarming about tales of dogs who sniff out survivors of bombing raids or who drop by parachute into enemy territory. Yet their very innocence gives them a moral neutrality which Jilly Cooper ignores. A dog's loyalty, a mule's devotion, are at the service equally of good cause and bad. They are mere agents of war, used, abused and usually discarded when it's over.

It's fitting that we should spare a thought for these innocent animals, who often work and die in the most appalling circumstances, but I could do without the gush and cuteness: 'The Romans were not wild about horses'; the longbow 'could shoot 250 yards (that's more than eleven cricket pitches)'; 'this is not a pretty story – it has been written with tears, not ink'. Jilly Cooper gives us a string of anecdotes, but a succession of accounts of little furry creatures displaying gallantry and gritty determination soon becomes wearying.

A dead animal is merely dead, but dead men, it was once believed, had souls. By the end of World War I 3,475 padres of all denominations served with the British forces, ministering to the spiritual needs of the troops. In **God On Our Side** Michael Moynihan relates the experiences of six padres, as recorded in their letters and journals. They were all worthy men, and some were heroically brave, and Mr Moynihan clearly intends his reader to honour them for their compassion, gallantry and devotion to duty. Yet this book summons up a response that is far more ambivalent.

These padres were conventional men, fully in tune with their times. Their Anglican belief was supple enough to accommodate the occasional misgiving in the face of the unremitting slaughter of the trenches. Moynihan's last example, Willie Doyle, presents a very different case. An Irish Jesuit, Father Doyle displayed such self-sacrificing gallantry that he was acclaimed by all who knew him for his saintliness and recommended for a posthumous V.C. However, Doyle had dedicated his life to the pursuit of martyrdom; his own account of the penances he daily exacted on his flesh are chilling in their masochism. He did not fear death, for he was sure of the afterlife, and he dauntlessly administered the last rites to dying soldiers while shells fell all around. His narrow escapes he regarded as providential; in a moment of sublime perversity he wrote: 'Did not that shell come from the hand of God? He willed it should be so. Is it not proof that He can protect you no matter what the danger?' As Doyle was to discover, the answer is no.

It would be crass to suggest that Doyle, and other less fervent padres, were indifferent to death, but their unbending faith in God's goodness and in heavenly reward surely allowed them to take an oddly relaxed view of the carnage around them. They rarely doubted that God was indeed on their side. This book, intended to be inspiring, is in fact dispiriting – though it's reassuring to reflect that present-day clerics are less inclined to condone mass destruction than were their counterparts of 70 years ago. □

SOCIETY
Mary Harron

Half-truths

Gender
IVAN ILLICH *Marion Boyars* £8.95 & £4.95

Ivan Illich's reputation has declined since the mid-Seventies. Now, his attack on the consumer society is dismissed as both romantic and reactionary, the dream of an anarchist who rejects social progress for his own myth of a pre-industrial golden age. Certainly the weakness of his polemic has always been the daunting nature of his solution: the only answer to a technological society is to dismantle it and return to a world of village communities, self-sufficiency and subsistence farming. The ecological crisis may well prove Illich right. However, faced with such a massive about-turn, we tend to retreat into a paralysing indifference. Illich's pessimism has proved counter-productive. If our only alternative is to turn back the clock and live like Brueghel's peasants, we sigh, we might as well go on taking aspirin and dying slowly of lead poisoning, because the game is up.

Illich has always said that his task is to diagnose the cancers in modern society, not to find the cure. If this is a convenient evasion of responsibility, it is nevertheless true that it is in his diagnosis that we find the real value of Illich's work. Beginning with his own experiences within the Catholic church, Illich has given us a theory of the shaping powers of institutions: he put a spotlight on that peculiarly modern process by which knowledge, and with it power, has passed into the hands of 'experts'.

This analysis of institutions forms part of a larger attack on 'the economics of scarcity' in which self-sufficiency is replaced by competition and a social hierarchy based on the struggle for both goods and knowledge. *Gender* marks Illich's first and belated attempt to adapt this to the realm of sexual politics; but then one senses that this former priest is not used to thinking about women at all. Like all ideologues, Illich forces every

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new idea and scrap of information into his all-embracing system, and this defence of women's rights is really another attack on consumption. Illich's premise is that:

> . . . peace between men and women, whatever form it might take, depends on economic contraction and not on economic expansion. Up to now no goodwill and no struggle, no legislation and no technique, have reduced the sexist exploitation characteristic of industrial society.

Illich's argument, presented with his usual autocratic zeal, depends on a redefinition of the words 'sex' and 'gender' which are then used as labels in a new classification of human history. 'Sex' tells us that the only difference between men and women is genital; their needs and aspirations are the same. 'Gender' tells us that men and women live in separate cultures, two distinct yet interlocking worlds.

All pre-industrial societies, Illich tells us, are based on gender: all labour is divided, often quite arbitrarily, into either men's or women's work. The question of which sex milks the cows or reaps the hay varies from culture to culture, even from village to village, but the separation is absolute. Men may be culturally dominant (the impression is that they usually are) but men do not interfere with women's work, and in the female quarters, or *gynaeceum*, women reign supreme.

With the rise of industrialisation this duality was discarded for 'the regime of economic sex'. Men and women have become genderless consumers fighting over the same goods and the same jobs: an unequal battle in which women are always underpaid and undervalued, eternally the Second Sex. Illich presents this as inevitable, but there is no explanation why – except that his theories demand it. In a single breezy aside he says he has deliberately ignored this question as 'a satisfactory answer depends on a fleshed out history of gender – and that remains to be written'.

Very helpful. Instead, Illich's essay, whose footnotes take up over half the text, offers manipulation in place of argument. The dice are weighted so that 'economic sex' is a catalogue of injustice, but any oppressions within gender are glibly tossed aside:

> Vernacular culture is a truce between genders, and sometimes a cruel one. Where men mutilate women's bodies, the *gynaeceum* often knows excruciating ways to get back at men's feelings.

Personally, I would rather have my feelings hurt than my body mutilated; and if we are to take Islam as an example of a gender-based society, perhaps we should stay with the regime of sex. In *Gender*, Illich's diagnosis is clumsy, but he does know where the pain is. As the fate of the Oxford colleges shows, women suffer when they leave their own domain for a competition in which the main resources are controlled by men. However, ours is a society in transition, and this battle has hardly begun. In the end both 'sex' and 'gender' are based on half-truths: sex ignores the subtle differences between men and women, gender ignores their equal abilities. Our sexual utopia will not be reached by moving backwards, but by finding a reconciliation between the two. □

JAZZ BOOKS

Charles Fox

No nonsense

Notes and Tones
ARTHUR TAYLOR *Quartet* £11.95
High Times, Hard Times
ANITA O'DAY (with GEORGE EELLS) *Corgi* £2.75
The Bessie Smith Companion
EDWARD BROOKS *Cavendish Publishing, 1 Ash Grove, Wheathampstead, St Albans, Herts.* £7.95 (£1 p&p)

Nobody latches on to the deficiencies of an interviewer faster than a visiting American jazz musician. (What a shame that Eddie Condon's merciless carve-up of Geoffrey Johnson-Smith on the old *Tonight* programme never got preserved on film.) Nevertheless, by being familiar with the right names, by chatting as much as questioning, even by pronouncing certain words correctly ('boogie woogie' usually sorts out those who know from those who don't), suspicions get lulled, bona fides are established, a friendly conversation is allowed to start. And yet – to get to the real nitty gritty – can a white, liberally-minded interviewer comprehend the special problems faced by black musicians?

Certainly not, according to the opinions elicited in *Notes and Tones*, a set of 27 interviews with black performers carried out by Arthur Taylor, who is black himself and also a drummer of quality. All the interviews date from between 1968 and 1972, a point worth remembering. For that was a peak of black nationalist fervour in the United States, a moment when the Muslims and the Panthers were very much in the news. Asked straight questions about the struggle within the ghettoes few contributors equivocated. Even those whom I have since interviewed myself seem much more belligerent in the book than they did in their London hotels half-a-dozen years later.

Jazz critics, on the whole, come off poorly. And in case that dismissal is thought of as being confined to white Americans, Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis specifically blames European critics for giving respectability to free jazz ('People like Albert Ayler and Shepp, there's no way in the world they would have been allowed on a bandstand in the States'). Aesthetic conservatism of that sort prevails throughout most of the book (Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry are the only representatives of what were then the newest trends). Taylor has a useful habit of asking different people the same questions, so some sort of consensus becomes visible. Boxing, for instance, seems generally accepted as a kind of black art form. The most urgent need seems to be for black-run agencies and record companies. But strategies can differ. In those days Max Roach preferred segregation to integration because it gave blacks more power ('The minute integration laws were passed, black people [in Harlem] began to move downtown to what they thought were better accommodation, and black owners lost their clientele').

Some views, including scepticism about the Beatles, could be called predictable. But also present is a rich vein of individual reminiscence, like Lockjaw Davis's account of how he came to play the saxophone: 'By watching musicians I saw that they drank, they smoked, they got all the broads, and they didn't get up early in the morning. That attracted me.' Shrewd, no-nonsense talking comes from the women, particularly Betty Carter, who is not inhibited from pointing out that black people rarely go to Ornette Coleman concerts. She even derides Sun Ra's blend of mysticism and show-biz ('It's nothing but bullshit. Sun Ra has got whitey going for it. He would be chased off the stage in Harlem or Bedford-Stuyvesant').

Anita O'Day's autobiography is also nicely unsentimental. So much so that the reader can easily become appalled by the contrast between the artistic achievements (Ms O'Day is, after all, one of the very finest jazz singers) and what was often a daily quest for a fix. Life was far more complicated than wearing a cartwheel hat and being filmed at Newport. The most fascinating part of the book deals with events before the singer's discovery of heroin. She sprang to fame with Gene Krupa's band, afterwards moving to that of Stan Kenton, about whom she is superbly patronising: 'He really did want to learn to swing.' (Dizzy Gillespie, in Taylor's interview, displays less charity: 'That motherfucker couldn't even keep time.')

Gin, rather than heroin, was Bessie Smith's indulgence or refuge. She even celebrates it in several of the songs she wrote herself or were written for her and which were the closest she came to producing an autobiography. 'Me and my gin' is just one of 159 recordings that she made, all of which are discussed in an elegantly precise and sensible way in Edward Brooks's book, an example of jazz – or blues – scholarship at its finest. The range of comment is nicely calculated. Because 'Wasted life blues' was recorded on 1 October 1929, for instance, just before the Wall Street crash, Brooks allows himself to wonder whether the lyrics reflect the uncertainties of the time.

But artistry is recognised even more consistently than social relevance. And cultural comparisons rove both high and low. 'The Gothic twilight' of the lyrics of 'Blue spirit blues' is likened to 'some of the poems by Giraud used by Schoenberg in *Pierrot lunaire*', while 'Far away blues' contains an unfortunate bit of phrasing which suggests 'a triplet à la Gracie Fields'. All this, plus a complete discography (it even lists the tempo and voice compass of each piece) and a plenitude of notes explaining the meaning of period slang such as 'moonshine' (not nonsense but liquor) or – much obscurer – 'buffet flat'. Two expressions, in fact, that any ofay intrepid enough to interview Bessie Smith would have found handy for helping to break the ice. □

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Paul Muldoon

Yggdrasill

From below, the waist-thick pine
seemed to arch
its back. It is a birch,
perhaps. At any rate, I could discern
a slight curvature of the spine.

They were gathered in knots
to watch me go.
A pony fouled the hard-packed snow
with her glib cairn,
someone opened a can of apricots.

As I climb
my nose is pressed to the bark.
The mark
of a cigarette burn
from your last night with him.

A snapshot of you and your sister
walking straight
through 1958,
The Works of Laurence Sterne
your only aid to posture.

The air is aerosol-
blue and chill. I have notched
up your pitch-
pine scent and the maidenhair fern's
spry arousal.

And it would be just swell and dandy
to answer
them with my tonsure,
to return
with the black page from *Tristram Shandy*.

Yet the lichened
tree trunk will taper
to a point where one scrap of paper
is spiked, and my people yearn
for a legend:

It may not be today
or tomorrow, but sooner or later
the Russians will water
their horses on the shores of Lough Erne
and Lough Neagh.

Among this week's contributors:

PAUL MULDOON's new book of poems, *Quoof*, will be published by Faber this autumn.

STEPHEN BROOK has books coming out in the near future on dreams and on New York.

CHRISTOPHER HIRD, formerly Deputy Editor of the *NS*, is currently Editor of Insight at the *Sunday Times*.

ANTHONY BARNETT's most recent book was *Iron Britannia*, his study of the Falklands affair.

HUGO WILLIAMS is both poet and travel-writer, his latest book in the latter category being *No Particular Place to Go* (Cape 1981).

Summer reading from FABER AND FABER

Robert Lowell: A Biography
IAN HAMILTON
'A considerable achievement, one of the best literary biographies of a modern writer I have ever read.; *Anthony Thwaite, The Spectator*
'Ian Hamilton has dramatised a brilliant, intellectual world . . . with sustaining intelligence and narrative skills.' *Michael Ratcliffe, The Times* £12.50

Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter
MARIO VARGAS LLOSA
'A novel as full of fizz as a giant packet of sherbet, witty, wise and wonderful . . . as tense as a thriller and racy as a romance.' *Nicholas Shrimpton, Sunday Times* £7.95

Constance *or* Solitary Practices
LAWRENCE DURRELL
'Mr Durrell's imagination is powerful and original, his prose is that of a poet . . . few readers of *Constance* will be able to resist the spell.' *Selina Hastings, Daily Telegraph* Faber Paperback £2.95

1915
ROGER McDONALD
'This fine story . . . glitters with the gold of good language . . . 400 pages of sparkling narrative at a knockdown price.' *David Hughes, Mail on Sunday* Faber Paperback £2.50

Mapmakers: Writing in a State of Siege
ANDRÉ BRINK
This selection of Brink's essays, the first ever in book form, affords a rare insight into the pains and dilemmas of living and writing in South Africa. Faber Paperback £3.95

How German Is It
WALTER ABISH
'Brilliant detective novel on one level; relentlessly honest exposure of the German character on another. A dazzling literary achievement and a savage indictment of a pretentious and hypocritical society.' *W. Gordon Smith, Sunday Standard* Faber Paperback £2.25

Venice
JAMES MORRIS
'A really first-class guide book, such as can claim to be a work of art.' *The Spectator* Third edition. Faber Paperback £3.95

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The Glasgow Rape Case

ROSS HARPER & ARNOT MCWHINNIE
Hutchinson £5.95

At ground level this is the true story of the horrific rape and mutilation of a young woman in her late twenties in the Barrowfield district of Glasgow. She'd had a quarrel with her boyfriend, gone out and got a bit tipsy and decided to walk back home. She was grabbed by a couple of teenagers, hauled into a derelict container, raped repeatedly by them and two of their friends and then systematically cut with an old-fashioned razor about her cheeks, her nose, her forehead, her neck, her thighs and her buttock until the flesh was literally falling off. By some miracle she crawled for help, her flesh was stitched up and her life saved. The reality of the *macho* violence of Glasgow gangland is narrated straight, with frightening clarity.

It's the sequel that gives the book its extra dimension. The woman (Carol X), discharged from hospital and quickly forgotten by the authorities, grows slowly more depressed. Her mind turns to suicide. The attackers are found, interrogated, and confess. The scene shifts to the Crown Office in Edinburgh and an anonymous (for fear of libel?) lawyer called an Advocate Depute. He hires a psychiatrist to interview Carol, who indicates that she might become even more suicidal if asked to give evidence in court. Carol's opinion and feelings are not canvassed. So the (male) lawyers tell the (male) culprits that the charges are dropped and tell the (female) victim nothing at all. The sleek Edinburgh legal Establishment comes over, in its own way, almost as sexist and unfeeling as the brutalised youth of Glasgow's East End.

Right, of course, triumphs in the end. Some English judges have been blaming women for being raped, so there's a furore in the Commons. The Scottish Solicitor General, Nicholas Fairbairn, misjudges the mood, and is ritually tossed as a sacrificial morsel to the popular press; and the same legal Establishment that condemned Carol to oblivion resurrects a piece of Scottish legal small print allowing private prosecutions. A sort of justice is done at the end of the day, with one culprit turning Queen's evidence, two others given compassionate suspended sentences, while their most violent colleague who used the razor is sent down for 12 years.

The authors are respectively a left-wing Tory lawyer, who spotted the chink in the legal system and took the private prosecution, and a hard-bitten crime reporter on the Glasgow *Daily Record*, who smelt a rat early on, was contacted by a Deep Throat, and lifted the story to national prominence. (Whether this public-spirited individual was a policeman or a lawyer is not clear.) So everyone lived happily ever after, except Carol, who'll never forget, and 17-year-old Joe Sweeney, properly put away for 12 years, yet a victim of the neglect and poverty in Glasgow and the nihilistic violence which it spawns. And will spawn again.

Christopher Price

AUTHORITARIAN SOCIALISM IN AMERICA
Edward Bellamy and the Nationalist Movement
ARTHUR LIPOW

"I go for the intelligence and style of . . . *Authoritarian Socialism in America*. [Lipow] brilliantly distinguishes the socialism one wants from that one resists."
Bernard Crick, *New Statesman*

"This is a remarkably interesting book . . . . It helps to get a better grasp of genuine democratic socialism and surely at this moment of history that is important."
Eric Heffer, *New Socialist*

520 04005 8 £24.50
University of California Press,
Ely House, 37 Dover Street, London W1X 4HQ

Current Accounting Law and Practice 1983

ROBERT WILLOTT *Quinta Publishing* £22.50

This book is now justly well established as the most comprehensive and authoritative guide to everything that a company has to disclose in its annual financial report. As its 700 pages show, it is not a handbook or manual on how to use a company's profit and loss account or balance sheet, but it is, all the same, the indispensable reference work for those who are interested in such things. And I believe that more socialists should be interested: unless we now develop a comprehensive understanding of the nature of risk and enterprise and a reasonable facility with financial statements, we shall have considerable difficulty both in winning the argument for socialist business policies and in successfully implementing them when we get the chance. Grappling with the financial dimensions of companies' activities is part of this process.

Christopher Hird

West Papua: The Obliteration of a People

TAPOL £2.50

During the Falklands war last year, some critics of the government suggested that the dispute with Argentina could best be solved by the United Nations. The world body, it was felt, could be guaranteed to settle the conflict fairly and impartially, with due regard to the rights of the Falkland Islanders.

Just how mistaken such a view might have been is shown by this book which deals with the Dutch de-colonisation of West New Guinea and the latter's subsequent forcible incorporation into Indonesia in 1969 with United Nations approval.

Since then, Jakarta's policy of 'Indonesianisation' has sought systematically to obliterate the people, culture and liberation struggle of West Papua (as the area is now called by the indigenous Melanesian population). After re-colonising the territory, Jakarta renamed it the province of Irian Jaya. Nationalist symbols, such as the West Papuan flag, were banned. Thousands of Melanesian officials were dismissed from their posts and replaced by Javanese from among the 300,000 who have been re-settled in West Papua from overcrowded Java under an ambitious transmigration programme. Islam has been officially propagated with vigour to undermine the indigenous culture. Multi-national corporations have been given *carte blanche* to push aside the local people in the exploitation of massive oil and copper reserves.

Up to 50,000 Indonesian troops are stationed in West Papua to pacify the population and put down the nationalist uprising led by the Organisasi Papua Merdeka (Free Papua Movement). Though they are poorly armed, often with vintage Second World War guns and even just bows and arrows, the OPM's 'ambush and run' tactics have been able to inflict heavy casualties on well-armed Indonesian forces.

Predictably, Britain has a hand in the repression of the West Papuans. The government recently agreed to supply another five Hawk ground-attack aircraft to the Jakarta military regime; precisely the type of plane used to bomb OPM bases and pro-nationalist villages.

This book, published by TAPOL (the British Campaign for the Defence of Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia), at last takes the lid off a forgotten people and a struggle for self-determination which the United Nations betrayed.

Peter Tatchell

The Police: Autonomy and Consent

MICHAEL BROGDEN *Academic Press* £21

This book is an important contribution to understanding contemporary police power. It is also an academic work which attempts to develop a theory of the state in an advanced capitalist society. Its real strength is that its argument is supported by extensive historical and empirical data, in particular primary materials relating to local government and the police force in Liverpool.

The basic thesis is that Chief Officers and their police forces have been able, since the formation of the 'new police' in the 1830s, to establish a significant degree of autonomy. They have become autonomous not only on the level of local government but also, in the 20th century, from central government. This political process has involved a 'managerial ideology' which conceives of the police as professional and politically neutral agents of the rule of law. The author especially emphasises the political role of the Association of Chief Police Officers.

The ultimate legitimation of police autonomy is the 'consent' of the public who view the police as acting impartially in the interests of the whole community. In the second half of the book Michael Brogden presents the police as engaged in the 'manufacture' of consent by maintaining the image of impartial law enforcement while in practice acting largely against marginal sections of the community. The recent emphasis on 'community policing', for example, is seen primarily as a means to legitimise a more effective form of policing. By stressing the success of the police in manufacturing consent the author appears to me too pessimistic about the possibilities of democratic political reform. The critical analysis is effective but there is insufficient discussion of political alternatives.

Michael Brogden attempts to place his analysis of the development of police autonomy within a theoretical argument about the relationship between the political power of the state, social class and the accumulation of capital. The study suffers from excessive use of sociological jargon, but it represents a major development in the study of police and state in that it is both conceptual and historical.

John Annette

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FICTION
Roger Lewis

Pinball

Death is Part of the Process
HILDA BERNSTEIN *Sinclair Browne* £7.95
Telling Tales
SARA MAITLAND *Journeyman* £8.95 & £3.75
L'Abbé C
GEORGES BATAILLE *Marion Boyars* £7.95

As we know, the Caucasian ruling-class in South Africa derives much of its wealth and comfort from the systematic degradation of the natives. The country is a version of ancient Rome without the culture: the rich men live in villas where their wives make a tragedy out of a cancelled hair appointment and the poor live in tin shacks without a toilet. Hilda Bernstein's novel chills us into realising that such a grossly unfair social stratification is unlikely to be destroyed. Her book registers the muted desperation of the blacks and the happy smugness of their masters.

Death is Part of the Process monitors the fumbled attempts of the aggrieved to make their passion felt. They concoct home-made bombs and set out to destroy railways and power-stations. Emphatically, death is not part of their process: they do not want to kill, only to register the existence of an Opposition. However, the Special Branch, South Africa's licensed thugs, descend upon the perpetrators with brutal glee: it is they who are empowered to start a process which can end, if they want, in a death.

We begin by following Indres as he is chased through the night by the police. He recalls that the tiny rebellion began when an innocuous exhibition of posters at the University was ripped apart by the authorities. Those who found this over-reaction particularly egregious become the pioneering 'terrorists'. We, too, are enticed into an alliance with the saboteurs when the rhetorical question is asked: 'How do you organise for change when organisations are banned and everyone who inspires others is taken and jailed?' The passive resistance of Gandhi seems hopelessly idealistic and the intricate constitutional procedures exist to fox and not to aid the operation of democracy. We aren't allowed to demur; 'there are no innocent people'. For Bernstein, to ignore the injustices is tantamount to condoning them; to be silent is to clamour approval. Owing to this, *Death is Part of the Process* becomes less of a novel than an exercise in ethics. We are expected to justify our points of view and there is an array of characters who embody different moral attitudes with which we can identify.

Paradoxically, however, the best character in the novel is the one whom we are meant to hold in the greatest contempt. Mrs Norval, with her liveried black servants, objects to her daughter attending political demonstrations because 'at the very least it's undignified'. She is like a garrulous ninny out of Jane Austen and her speeches are wonderful confections of infinite digression. Yet she is out of place in Bernstein's didactic tract. More fitting is Pila Norval, who relishes working with the rebels because she hates her plutocratic father. Thrown into jail she feels a martyr, and is hurt to be released without even being interrogated.

It is to jail that all the saboteurs ineluctably go. The noises of chains, keys and doors create 'an opera built on discords and dissonance'. This is the real South Africa: its heart of darkness. What the government finds unpleasant, it locks away. The guards justify their cruelty as a means of 'seeing the law observed'. Dick is made to stand until he gives his statement. He is kept in the same upright position for several days without sleep. Indres also stands and is simultaneously beaten. Thabo is suspended by his wrists and metal clips are attached to his tongue and ear-lobes. The police begin to electrocute him and this turns into a harrowing pinball game. Each of the torturers takes a turn at the control, seeing how high they can tip the voltage.

Sara Maitland's **Telling Tales** are ululatory fables about womankind. The battle of the sexes started as soon as Adam missed his rib and altercations have occurred ever since when his sons punish the daughters of Eve for not giving it back. Sara Maitland's book, nevertheless, transcends the limitations of having to view men as the enemy – creatures who pinion their women with psychological cruelty – and manages to work well as an exercise in the macabre.

In 'Natural Freaks' an adolescent daughter is repelled by her mother's pregnancy. She sees the mountainous belly as grotesque whereas the mother extols its beauty. These observations are made while visiting Potter's Museum of Curiosity, a Victorian freak show with its tableaux of taxidermised creatures in little costumes and mummified monsters in glass jars. The conjunction of anthropomorphism with the secret inside the mother's womb has an almost gothic bizarrerie. The most alarming tale is an account of binding the feet of Oriental girls to keep them petite. Underneath the perfumed socks is the stench of putrefaction. This represents fettered feminity, woman imprisoned; but it is also excellent as literature.

L'Abbé C would like to explore the cruelties of eroticism, but Georges Bataille's novel is extremely bad, perhaps because it is so extremely tame. Dotted lines indicate cut smut. The author pretends to be an editor who arranges the manuscripts we read during sessions with his psychiatrist and the story concerns the temptation of a priest by his libertine brother. Charles sees Robert as an extension of himself which has unaccountably become devout. He must defile it to make it conform to the rest of his personality. The author seems to imply a re-enactment of original sin. The trouble with original sin, however, is that it has made all subsequent ones derivative. □

DAVID CAUTE

THE K-FACTOR

His compelling novel of the war for Zimbabwe

'A powerful and convincing study of real people caught up in events beyond their control and outside their comprehension.'
ROBERT NYE The Guardian

'*THE K-FACTOR* shows how the fusion of powerful imagination and sense of history has made Mr Caute one of our most impressive novelists.'
Sunday Telegraph

'The atmosphere of mounting panic and slipping control is frighteningly conveyed.'
The Times

MICHAEL JOSEPH £8.95

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY
Alan Brien

Memorialisations

A Yorkshire Boyhood
ROY HATTERSLEY *Chatto* £8.95

Hattersley is potentially, if not already, a very great man, fit to rank with any giant of the past. Astonishingly versatile, cultured and knowledgeable to the point of genius, he remains unpretentious and good-humoured.

Reading this autobiography, which takes 215 pages to bring its subject to the age of 17, I have tried not to be prejudiced by that explosion of hyperbole from Brian Walden.

The book is impressively candid, fulsomely detailed and agreeably revealing, though only at a surface level. It might be the boyhood memoirs of Mr Pooter, or the early diaries of the Rt. Hon. Adrian Mole, PC, MP. Hattersley is a true egoist, self-centred without being offensively vain, fascinated by everything that ever happened to him as he grows up.

He offers himself as a rather clumsy, awkward, accident-prone lad, not very academic, often insecure in company, given to bursts of assertiveness only when he imagines himself the victim of some bureaucratic injustice. He was the only child of doting, protective parents, a hen-pecked, unambitious father and a dominant, pushy mother, and became the hub of an inward-turned family, including a bed-ridden gran and two bachelor uncles.

He was the most privileged member of this little enclave on the fringe of the lower-middle-class. Both grandfathers had been sturdy proletarians, given to drink, gambling and jolly roistering, while his mother's father had been renowned as 'the hope of the Communists in the coalfield'. Little of this filtered down to his genteel, teetotal branch, cut off from their past. The Hattersleys lived in their own house and he was sent early to a private school. Officially, this was because of his asthma, but his account makes clear it was also a matter of status.

The odd isolation resulted from his father having been a Roman Catholic priest who unfrocked himself to marry the daughter of an atheist agitator. It was something of a scandal at the time but Hattersley did not learn of his father's past until ten years ago, when he was 40 – which argues either exceptional lack of curiosity on one side or exceptional secretiveness on the other.

Most of Hattersley's ambitions, throughout the book, lie in the field of sports, where he seemed to have no outstanding natural aptitudes though he succeeded in making himself prominent by a mixture of determination, cunning and a conviction that this was his destiny. He briefly mentions indoctrination at a Socialist Sunday School, chorusing, 'The people, Lord, the people: not kings and thrones but men'. But then he hurries on to assure us that in Yorkshire nobody was socialist, the word was always Labour. Politics, when it came, meant a passion for organisation, canvassing, leafleting, heckling at meetings, rather than any infatuation with ideology.

Hattersley's tales of a Yorkshire boyhood are, unfortunately, not often here as well-written, eloquent or pungent as those he has included in some of his many newspaper columns. The reader has to swallow much pedestrian trivia which could intrigue only its author, or perhaps the author's mother. There are many times when the heart sinks at chapters which begin – 'The second year (at grammar school) passed uneventfully. I gave up woodwork'.

The style is weighted down with Roget, and the nasal-appendage school of elegant polysyllables, rarely choosing the Anglo-Saxon where a Latinism is available. I pick at random 'a state of pristine preparedness' or 'the temptation to manipulate life around my irregularly delicate condition'. Recording his performance in *Androcles and the Lion*, he announces: 'When I was asked to play one of the eponymous heroes, I gladly accepted the feline role.'

It is uncertain if he realises quite how pompously touchy, or fastidiously delicate, he makes himself appear as he rejects swimming lessons because 'being submerged in water fouled by 60 little boys was deeply repugnant to me' or objects to 'the indignity of being confirmed by a suffragan bishop'. Surprisingly, in a contemporary account of growing up, sex never once rears its lovely head. Perhaps because his mother was always monitoring his contacts with girls. Perhaps because he still does not want her to know.

The book's interest lies in its value to those who want to know what makes the adult Roy tick and how he will strike at the critical hour in the history of the Labour Party. Both supporters and opponents will find much to confirm their estimates. □

LABOUR IN CRISIS

By
Eric Preston
(with foreword by Eric Heffer)

Faces up to the "conservative culture" in British society, but also challenges the past record of the Labour right and points to the way forward for the left.

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Buried Inside Extra
THOMAS BABE *Royal Court*
A Moon for the Misbegotten
EUGENE O'NEILL *Riverside*
Exit the King
IONESCO *Lyric Studio, Hammersmith*

Not all David Williamson's plays have been about Aussie *machismo*, but those are the ones that I, at least, remember with the most amusement. *Don's Party*, *The Removalists*, *The Club*: their capsule protagonist would be a woman-hating, beer-swilling football coach caught in the process of beating his best friend to a pulp and enjoying the blows he received as much as those he sweatily delivered. Judging by their success, these exercises in comic anthropology touched some nerve in their audiences; yet I venture to suspect that those who laughed at Williamson's sly observation did not feel personally got at, satirised or exposed. It will be harder for them to shrug off **The Perfectionist** because it involves the theatre-going classes and, specifically, a member of them whose *machismo* consists of addiction to achievement, success. Son of a high-flying father who neglected his wife and drove his children, he exploits his own wife and drives himself. Up and up he clambers towards what, being an academic, he calls 'international recognition'. We quickly realise that, in the unlikely event of his attaining it, it would never slake his restless, pernickety temperament.

We've met him. We may even *be* him. But having defined him, what are we to do with him onstage? Williamson's solution, not altogether successful, is to match him with a woman who sees through him, has modest ambitions for her own career, and proceeds to fall for an amiable drop-out in Denmark, at one of whose universities her husband is lecturing. Back home in Australia, she delivers ultimata that, as it turns out, have spectacular effects. The perfectionist's addiction abruptly switches from work to parenthood. Soon he is, as he puts it, 'performing at a highly competent level as an empathetic human bring' or, as she sees it, bringing up their children 'as if you were training commandos'. A new obsession has replaced the old.

As a study of zealotry in action it is lively enough; and Paul Freeman, glassy yet feverish, a man frozen at 110 degrees Fahrenheit, is very entertaining in the main part. Yet the feeling persists, grows, that Williamson has mislaid his compass, both dramatic and in-

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The perfectionist and the gentle Dane in conversation

tellectual. There is much raking over the past, represented by Mr Freeman's aggressive parents; an affair burgeons between Barbara Flynn, playing the fanatic's increasingly assertive wife, and Michael Maloney, the gentle Dane; and suddenly we find we've muddled our way to a resolution that, as it happens, is no resolution at all. He'll work, she'll work, he'll tend, she'll tend the nippers. They'll share. Or perhaps hire some help. Or something. It may, one supposes, be the honest ending, at least for this middle-class ménage: but after so much that's so wryly incisive about the mad male ego, it is just a little banal.

Let's hope that **Buried Inside Extra**, which is what we've received in return for *Top Girls* under the new agreement between Joe Papp's Public Theatre and our own Royal Court, isn't an omen of swaps to come. Max Stafford-Clark, smiling benignly beside the exit doors on Thursday night, admittedly didn't look like an Indian who had just realised he'd bartered the best his tribe had to offer for bangles and baubles; but there were times when this critic, fidgeting in comradely irritation in the stalls, felt that some such malpractice had been perpetrated upon his directorate. Was there ever a sillier, more incredible play than Thomas Babe's study of journalism and journalists at their more derelict?

It opens to the splash of whisky slurping down the city editor's well-pickled throat, a cliché characteristic of the evening about to unfurl. Then it emerges that the newspaper is about to close, then that an atom bomb is somewhere in the building. Since neither revelation bothers the characters over much, still less interrupts their stilted banter and heavy, swaggering badinage, neither adds great tension to the proceedings; and, indeed, it soon becomes apparent that both are important to Babe mainly as background excuses for a series of quasi-torrid emotional encounters, the sort that have fizzed and rattled round the hollow insides of a million *mini-melodramas in their time*. Sandy Dennis, putting in a too-brief appearance as the neglected, frigid wife of the hard-bitten but lovable newsroom *führer*, and using big, empty smiles and tiny twists of the mouth to express the pain of her predicament, brings a degree of authenticity even to her more improbable lines; but the rest of Mr Papp's cast tends to look and sound (and well it may) as if it's auditioning en masse for *The Front Page* as it might have been rewritten by a scriptwriter for *Dallas* or *Dynasty*.

The one consolation I can offer Mr Babe is that Eugene O'Neill, too, was often derided as overblown, implausible, absurd; and the critics who mocked him are now to be found in the Tyburn of theatrical history, dangling from the gibbets upon which they assiduously hanged themselves. Conceivably, if barely conceivably, a director more subtle than Papp might resuscitate *Buried Inside Extra*.

At any rate, such has been the good fortune of **A Moon for the Misbegotten**, a work pretty patronisingly received in its day and, let us admit, one that can seem awkwardly straddled between melodrama and country-bumpkin comedy in performance, especially in its earlier stages. After all, what happens? A cunning, bullying but good-hearted dirt-farmer and his tearaway daughter play havoc with the rich blimp who covets the land where they are tenants, and plan to do much the same with the attractive but supposedly treacherous drunkard who actually owns it. She will inveigle him into bed, her father will bring witnesses to ensure he's compromised, the landlord will be forced to honour his undertaking never to sell their smallholding.

But O'Neill's plot and style are both misleading. What both we and the farmer's daughter had seen as an amalgam of vengeance and blackmail is suddenly revealed as a ruse by her father to match her with the man she secretly loves and he knows would never break his promise. It is pleasingly logical, and it leads to as charged and fraught a scene as even O'Neill wrote. Cradled in the girl's lap, tipsy, mawkish, edgy, angry, the would-be lover begins to talk about himself; soon he is heaving up the dreads, pains, guilts and crazed, romantic longings that have long been corroding his innards, culminating in a description of how he slept with a whore on the train that was carrying his mother's corpse to its resting place; and both his convoluted self-disgust and her gravity and grief come marvellously to life, thanks to the emotional resource, the concentration, the sheer *class* of the players, Ian Bannen and Frances de la Tour. Thanks to that and, let's not forget, also to O'Neill himself, whose mind and heart turn out to be intact beneath the sometimes anecdotal, discursive surface. He wrote the play in memory of the wasted hopes of his alcoholic brother, and, all cavils aside, he ended by making it as searching and passionate an obit as anyone could wish.

Ionesco, if not as excitingly as Webster, is much possessed by death, and certainly sees the skull beneath the skin. Indeed, **Exit the King** is all about the efforts of – well, call him Everyman, in spite of the crown on his head – first to avoid facing his own mortality, then to divest himself of his illusory hopes and accept its inevitability. This process takes him two hours, and very, very long they seem, perhaps partly because Beckett has taught us that the same subject can be treated much more succinctly, probably more because Christopher Fettes's production is so relentlessly, so grimly monotonous. Or was the object to demonstrate one more way of readying people for death, that of boring them to it? □

FILMS
John Coleman

Have a heart

Tender Mercies (PG)
ABCs, Shaftesbury Avenue and Fulham Road
Friends and Husbands (15)
Academy One
One from the Heart (15)
Lumière Cinema
Flashdance (15)
Empire

Most of the fascination in what thereby qualifies as the week's least tiresome movie comes in watching that chameleon actor Robert Duvall step into the skin of a part and make its veins throb. In **Tender Mercies**, the Australian director Bruce Beresford's first outing on American soil, Duvall fairly redeems the Hollywood-homespun clichés of Horton Foote's lightweight script, biting off laconic lines as if they held something to chew on. His Mac Sledge is a one-time star country-and-western singer-composer, burnt out on booze but saved for sobriety and a kind of peace by marriage to a Vietnam war widow, Rosa Lee (Tess Harper), with a 10-year-old son and a motel-cum-gas-station near a small Texan town. The 'story' is a series of incidents, beginning

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swiftly enough with Mac's waking hungover and broke in a motel room, offering to work out his debt to Rosa Lee, quick-cutting to his hoeing a patch ('I haven't had a drink in two months') while proposing to the gentle, choir-singing woman.

A reporter comes snooping, disrupting Mac's anonymity. Some local rednecks then visit, proving to be mild-mannered admirers, aspiring musicians seeking his advice ('Sing it the way you feel it'). Bad moments arise when Mac's still angry ex-wife, a celebrated c-and-w artiste, tours in the neighbourhood, Mac tries to see his now grown daughter, the daughter finally calls on him, herself weds a drunk from mama's group and is killed in a car crash. But the worst moment has preceded this, when Mac – on the rejection of a song – speeds off from his new family into what could be a drunken fall from grace: the uneasy vigil of Rosa Lee and the boy (Allan Hubbard) is superbly acted and directed. Elsewhere, it's up to Duvall, for all the picturesque landscape framings and odd, sharp details (a guitar-shaped wreath by that daughter's coffin). The Mac-character must, in fact, have been a prize bastard in a glancingly disclosed past; but his present, reined-in and awkwardly decent words and moves grab attention, smoulderingly. A very small film around people uncomfortable with language, it has this big performance, making incoherence articulate.

As admirers of *The German Sisters* will know, the harsh, contemporary, angst-ridden, urban world of Margarethe von Trotta is not short on talk: hortatory, committed, self-questioning, 'intellectual'. Maybe too much of this in her scripting and direction of **Friends and Husbands,** which jumps nervously about the plight of a withdrawn wife, Ruth (Angela Winkler, mostly in black), and the loving efforts of strong Olga (Hanna Schygulla, mostly in trousers) to tug her back into society. Ruth can't answer telephones, paints black-and-white copies of museum masterpieces, has sick memories of an artist brother who hanged himself after a successful exhibition, and is damned in a caring, jealous husband Franz (Peter Striebeck), some sort of TV prof. of peace studies, who at first encourages the friendship with Olga. This Olga is a lecturer in literature, living with her son and a sponging musician-lover: her students are exposed to quotations from such culturally repressed women notables as Bettina von Arnim (1785-1859), with slides.

Into this hothouse atmosphere side-trips to Provence and Egypt – the latter with incredible abruptness – are inserted, increasing the emotional temperature. Furthermore, Ruth is given to black-and-white fantasies of suicide and murder. Von Trotta contrives some of the intricate examination of mixed motives with address and a certain wit. Olga's assumed strength, for example, is shown to be something generally wished on her rather than rock-solid; and Franz is revealed as a creature of unpleasant complexity, a very mere man with a difference. Two points particularly bother me, though. We might have interpreted Ruth's final fantasy as a liberation had it not been for a brief opening scene that implies otherwise. And there is that dicey business of deciphering the Teutonic sense of humour. Is one supposed to laugh at the way a monochrome Olga is implicated, if only imaginarily, in a crime at the ambiguous close? More matter next time, please, and less art. These friends and lovers and wives and husbands are draining company.

Poor Terri Garr and Frederic Forrest are even worse news in Francis Ford Coppola's long-awaited flop, **One from the Heart,** a deliberately studio-constructed affair so gaudily obsessed with nugatory technical devices and effects that no notion of how folks behave (even in movies) is allowed to disrupt it. To watch Ms Garr fighting unsayable lines, as she breaks up with Forrest after five years cohabitation in Las Vegas for a Fourth of July fling, is to die somewhat. He has a fling, too, which unpardonably wastes Nastassia Kinski. A dozen songs laid over on the soundtrack have a lot of explaining to do, as does Coppola. There is some thronged cavorting in a neon-crazy street, Garr and her one-night stand tango against shifting backgrounds; but is this a musical? And, if not, what is it? As an ironic tailpiece in comes one from the computer, Adrian Lyne's piece of ad-age packaging, **Flashdance,** which took $41m. in its first eight weeks and confirms there is a witless audience out there for noise, speed, dancers whirling bemusingly on their bums. Jennifer Beals as the *Saturday Night* welder is fetching, but one Marine Jahan did the terpsichorean trickery. □

TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Chasing dreams

BOB AND Gordon decided to pool their talents (sic) in order to win 'something really big' (**I Like Competitions Because . . .** ITV). Now they think they have unravelled all the clues to the hiding place of Toblerone's 'silver longboat', which will gain them a Ford Sierra. 'Look', says Bob, putting his hand down a drain in the forecourt of Sheffield station 200 miles from where they live, 'There's no symbol here. Let's hope we're more successful in Bishop's Stortford.' Off they went.

Mary's husband developed a machine for her to view spot-the-difference competitions through. Someone else wrote, 'Cookery courses, that's my husband's thesis,/To change my doodles into masterpieces.' But the prize-winning lesson in Bologna had her feeling queasy. 'It a-come-out nearly every-a-thing that is inside-a-tha-squid', cook Marcella Hazan was saying, as she turned the unfortunate animal inside out like a glove and held up its only bone to her dismayed students. 'Pay for an airline ticket?' a comp-head said in amazement. 'I've won between 30 and 40 holidays to places like Finland, Denmark, Benidorm, America and Spain. I come home and there's a note saying: "Ring us. You're off again".' His dazed wife looked on in love. Meanwhile, Bob and Gordon have reached Bishop's Stortford. 'If this is the memorial', says Gordon, 'flies the crow towards the setting sun . . . must be westward.' Gordon is slightly dominant in this well-matched team of losers. Bob is on his knees, looking under a plinth. 'It's a bed for a rat, Gordon,' he giggles. 'It's definitely not here . . . Maybe it's ten paces *from* here?'

I couldn't help feeling that our sanguine pair were playing the game correctly in losing all the competitions. The silver longboat seemed to gleam more brightly somehow in their excited laughter than the endless radios and coffee tables did in the anal-erotic storage places of all the other systematically successful competition players. At the end of this funny film on what is apparently a peculiarly British sickness, a psychologist put forward the view that the only definition of happiness is its pursuit, proving that Bob and Gordon may be nearer the point of it all than they think.

Dreams, like the mysterious Orient, are a subject on which the opposite of what people say is usually equally true. However, it seems possible that our theories about dreams may say something about our characters. Morton Schatzman (**Opinion,** C4) had the revealing opinion that dreams are the continuation – the home therapy as it were – of his, Morton Schatzman's, job as a 'psychotherapist'. He has been led to think this by the fact that many of his patients dream about him. From this he has concluded that he must be appearing there in his professional capacity of problem-solver, though it seems likely that for any one dream in which Morton appears as a giant-killer, heroic redeemer or shouter of words across an abyss, there may be others in which he features as an inaudible railway PA or randy old sod. Would this also be a solution?

Anyone who has dipped into J. W. Dunne's *Experiment With Time* will recognise Schatzman's view that part of our minds appears to know things that the other doesn't and that this know-all side plays hide-and-seek with its more pedestrian partner, occasionally offering him, according to Schatzman, dramatic solutions to the problems that trouble his waking life. Here is one of his proofs. An American (what else?) researcher got 500 people to think about the letters hijklmn before falling asleep. He was gratified when one of 500 reported that he had dreamed about water (h to o – H^2O, neat, huh?). It seems to me that Bob and Gordon should get into Schatzman's line of business where there is more scope for being in the right.

'It's nice, it's firm, it's juicy, it's meaty, it's chunky', that coy Aberdonian girl was saying as we switched to **Tom Jones Now** (BBC-1), presumably so titled to distinguish it from 'Tom Jones Then', though there was no need for this. Her words made me wonder what happened to the spare hundredweight or so Jones had lopped off his nose in the Sixties. From what I can re-

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member of it there was enough to solve Dusty's feeding problems for all time. But Jones has sacrified more than a decent conk to the blue rinse set. From his answers to an interview in *Radio Times*, it seems that he is singing under a massive misapprehension. He imagines that what he does in Las Vegas has something to do with rock 'n' roll.

Jones, according to Whitcomb, has 'inherited the mantle of Elvis'. The mantle he may have inherited. Both singers favoured the same kind of tasselated toreador outfits that Gary Glitter later modified. Having eagerly proved Presley's favourite song, 'Don't Be Cruel', to be just another square foot of plush, Jones triumphantly removed his red-sequined bolero jacket and hurled it on to the table of some nearby diners, revealing a jumbo crucifix glinting among superfluous chest hair. 'O yeah, it was a honky tonk woman', he sings to his Las Vegas faithfuls, popping his eyes at them to denote a fiery personality. 'Satin Doll', 'I Get a Kick Out of You', 'Unchained Melody', his act is a sustained travesty of its component parts. Attaining a new high in Kitsch, he would like to leave us with a thought by a Miss Jane Porter: 'Happiness is not perfected till it is shared.' And that's rock 'n' roll, Mr Jones? □

TELEVISION – 2
Anthony Barnett

Vietnam now

'THERE MUST be something wrong with the series', one of the team who worked on it told me, 'if it is praised by everyone from the *Morning Star* to the *Daily Mail*'. Well yes, there is indeed something wrong with Channel 4's major contribution to television, its 12-part documentary history of Vietnam, which has just ended.

But it is more important to join in the celebration of its achievement. Programme after programme sustained a gripping synthesis of recent history, cool in its presentation, sometimes unendurably 'hot' in the images of brutality and suffering that it transmitted. The breadth of the contrasts that the series as a whole managed to bring together gave each instalment a satisfying objectivity. As one watched one knew that different, indeed opposite conclusions would be actively drawn by other viewers. But that was the case during the war itself, hence the sense that much of the truth of Vietnam was indeed being presented.

The makers must have put in a great deal of sustained and careful work to gather up pieces of the war and its memories that until now had been fragmented in public consciousness. Most important, they interviewed people from both sides: Hanoi as well as Washington, Vietnamese as well as Americans. Marvellous archive film – which always takes hours to unearth – was juxtaposed with recent interviews of those we had just seen. They had aged, but were recognisable. The closeness and the distance came across together. Vietnam happened *then*, but *we* are still living in its shadows.

Ordinary soldiers and civilians were interviewed, as well as the Generals and the politicians. Scrupulously, the mosaic of a terrible conflict was put together, over time and space, across generations and political divides. For me the most extraordinary and moving example was in the reconstruction of an unknown massacre, broadcast in episode 5, 'America Takes Charge'. Victims and perpetrators recounted the horror and confusion; we could begin to see the whole.

How was this achieved and why is it exceptional? Television loathes normality. It is a medium of feelings (from entertainment to horror) rather than argument. It lives off dramatic experience and contrast, rather than the elucidation of actual complexity. Hence TV inherently exaggerates and is prone to cheap emotions, parasitic as it is upon the 'striking image'. Thus the Vietnam War was ideal material for a very bad series.

Instead, the makers of this series kept their nerve. From Richard Ellison, the American executive producer, who initiated the project, through Richard Creasey of Central and Martin Smith the British co-producer, the resources and effort and above all the time were applied, necessary for an *honest* programme – that little word which is much scorned for its ridiculousness, but which is in fact extremely taxing of intelligence and judgment.

For once the real potential of television documentary was realised, its ability to actualise across space and time into our living rooms. Whatever criticisms are possible of detail, of analysis and of omission, the conflict of passions was transmitted: the Americans who escalated, the soldiers who obeyed and then resisted, the protestors and supporters, the Vietnamese, the victims and the victors. The makers drew on television's marvellous capacity to combine and accumulate from every corner incidents, images, memories, speeches, graphics and commentary. Their judgments made the series a true, contemporary history. Vietnam has been remembered. As those who rule us would much rather that it was forgotten, the achievement is more than simply one of technical finesse.

What, then, could possibly be wrong with such a stunning achievement? Paradoxically, the greatest contribution of the series was also its most obvious limitation, namely its 'balance'. Hitherto, the war has been seen almost exclusively as something done by the Americans to Vietnam. The Vietnamese themselves are either seen as innocent victims or as the embodiment of some nefarious menace or, very rarely, as peasant heroes. In this series they at least came across as our contemporaries, purposive and dedicated nationalists in Hanoi, confident of their popular support, up-tight and constantly frustrated pro-Westerners in Saigon. Indeed, the characteristic eccentricity of the Vietnamese, which is one of the most likeable aspects of their culture but which they never feel confident enough to project in their own films, finally came across.

But to achieve this the series had to be balanced between the two sides, as if they were equal. The breakthrough of showing the other side as human was gained at the cost of making their side equal. It was only in the grain of the footage that one could feel the gigantic inequality. In the final episode came the casualty figures: 300,000 Americans, three million Vietnamese injured by the war; 60,000 American dead, one and a half million Vietnamese dead. What sort of human equality is that?

The viewers were not asked the question directly. The ironies and injustice perpetrated in Vietnam were initiated and reproduced primarily and overwhelmingly by Washington. It spoke of freedom but dealt only for its own power. Taken as a whole, this is what the record shows. My favourite irony came from Richard Nixon in 1965:

> What is involved here is in effect to let the Red Chinese know in Vietnam. . . . that the United States will not stand by and allow any power however great to take over another country by aggression.

And in Peking seven years later, seeking Mao and Chou's help to impose his power over South Vietnam:

> Our two peoples tonight hold the future of the world in our hands.

Today, this is the rhetoric we hear from President Reagan, as he attempts to re-cycle the 'Crusade for Peace' in Central America. War is forced on Nicaragua and then the Nicaraguans are accused of being war-like, just as were the Vietnamese. Screaming will never drown or silence such official mendacity. Only by grasping the reality of history in argument can such a contest of ideas and attitudes be won. The Vietnam series sought to present a whole historic picture. It has thereby deepened the democratic culture of the West at the very time when this has to be protected once again from its own leaders. □

MUSIC
Andrew Clements

Coming of age

Our Hunting Fathers
BENJAMIN BRITTEN *EMI ASD 4397*

There have been so many 'discoveries' of early works – juvenilia would be too dismissive a description – by Benjamin Britten that a new recording of a published piece might seem less than remarkable. But Elisabeth Söderström's account of *Our Hunting Fathers*, with the orchestra of Welsh National Opera conducted by Richard Armstrong deserves special, detailed mention. Not only did the work, completed in 1936, mark the composer's artistic coming-of-age – Britten himself referred to itreal' opus one – but it is arguably the most significant product of his collaboration with W. H. Auden.

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Donald Mitchell's account of *Britten and Auden in the Thirties* (Faber, 1981) devotes a good deal of space to *Our Hunting Fathers*, to its genesis and analysis. When that study was published, however, there was no recording available with which to satisfy the curiosity it aroused; since then two have appeared. The BBC has released a performance from a studio recording in 1961 with Peter Pears and the BBC Symphony conducted by Britten, and now comes the EMI disc with scrupulous sound and first-rate performances, though obviously lacking the other's imprimatur. Yet, if anything, the extra vividness of the newcomer only enhances the sense of delight in the work, for Britten's imagination and mastery in orchestral scoring need to be savoured as richly as possible.

Britten and Auden had met in 1935, when both were working for the GPO film unit, turning their respective talents to documentary production. They originally conceived the cycle as a study of man's relationship with animals, and Britten secured the ideal premiere for the projected work, at the Norwich Festival, where its defiant attitude to blood sports was calculated to cause maximum discomfiture. Auden selected three poems, the anonymous 'Rats Away!' and 'Messalina' and Thomas Ravenscroft's 'Hawking for Partridge', which he retitled 'Dance of Death'. He framed them with a prologue and epilogue of his own, intended in their opaque way to set the rest in perspective.

In themselves the chosen texts are mild enough, yet Britten pulls out of them blatant and grotesque emphases that sometimes give the work a surrealistic and savage edge, as well as introducing a barely concealed satirical comment on the international situation at the time. 'Rats Away!' is the most extreme, functioning as an invocation to banish rats from the house (or concert hall) and ending with a parody of an *In Nomine* with the solo voice treated almost orchestrally with extreme virtuosity. The inflated lament of Messalina for her pet monkey is set within an instrumental texture of enormous ingenuity – the excessive emotions the poem generates are discharged in interlocked cadenzas perfectly judged.

The orchestral virtuosity is most obvious in 'Dance of Death' and here also Britten exceeds anything he demands of a voice elsewhere in his oeuvre, making it whirr and roll its r's and slide over more than an octave. Man hunting animals seems to be only a subsidiary concern here; Britten is looking farther afield, to Europe and what was happening there. He begins with a roll call of the hounds in the chase, picking out two of them for special, whispered treatment – 'German', 'Jew'.

Our Hunting Fathers is a fascinating portrait of the early Britten, possibly the most penetrating we have in music so far. Söderström sings it with great piquancy, savouring its conceits and projecting its fury with well-focused energy. The fill-ups are some rarely heard orchestral arrangements of folksongs which Britten made in the 1940s and '50s. They provide a perfectly judged counter-weight. □

FIRST PERSON

Bill Greenwell

Nits in the groves

IN THE GROVES of Academe . . . *Hold it right there!* Whenever I hear that venerable phrase, for which we would appear to be indebted to Horace, it skiffles into my inner lug with a tune in tow. To be precise, trailing the Fats Waller version of 'The Sheik of Araby', the opening line of which – 'I'm the Sheik of Araby' – is possessed of syllable and stress in measures equal to my opening cliché. The stupidity of the rhythm and the sonority of the phrase combine quite nicely; for there's something foolishly seductive about the nether-nether land of the nitpicking critic, something both calamitous and yet merrily absurd about turning pages as if they were turves, about cracking paragraphs like oysters for the odd pearl. My particular fix is administered twice a year by a Canadian publication, *The Malcolm Lowry Newsletter*. This nifty journal is dedicated to digging up juicy titbits in the cracks of Lowry's novels, especially *Under the Volcano*. And ever since my fellow First Person Anne Smith put me on to *MLN*, I have been hopelessly hooked.

The most recent issue deals with the second word of the 17th line of page 192 of *Under the Volcano* (we are using the Penguin edition). This word is 'Chagfordian', and it describes the tie worn by the novel's central figure on the page under scrutiny. Under the helpful sub-heading 'The Consul's Old Chagfordian Tie', one C. J. Ackerley of the University of Otago, New Zealand, explains that Chagford is a small market town on the edge of Dartmoor (this much I can confirm). Lowry knew the place (proof provided). Now,

> There is no public school in the town, but many years previously a Mrs. Watkinson, whose husband had been killed in a submarine disaster, ran a small private institution for the sons of naval officers.

Mr Ackerley has cracked the 'implicit overtones' – odd, I'd have banked on them being undertones – of 'Chagfordian', *viz*:

> Despite his attention to his dress, the Consul's air of infallibility will be as unavailing as the Pope's.

Now, let's put a shoe on this footnote. The Consul's father is not naval, or if he is, Kashmir was a strange port up in which to be holed. The Consul has been (p.25) to a 'strict Wesleyan' school. There is a submarine 'disaster' in the crannies of *Volcano*, but of no relevance to the Consul's education. Even given Lowry's peculiar obsession with symbolic detail, 'Chagfordian' seems no more than a happily convenient-sounding name for a school: probably a Lowry in-joke. Come on, Mr Ackerley . . .

You see? I'm in there digging with the rest of them. It is a tiny mental contretemps like this which makes me realise what happens when academics cannot see the trees for the twigs. The more you read, the more you miss, although it is impossible to recognise the critical point of no return. For my sins, and also money, I teach something called 'English Literature'; and recently, I have also fallen into the quicksand which abuts those noble groves. For reasons too complex to explain here, I have been stuck for six years with *The Return of the Native*: a Hardy perennial, as it were. It is a long time since I made proper contact with the novel. I have reached the terminal stage; I am bothered by miniature bungles – for instance, Hardy cocks up the time at the climax of the plot, a fact to which I lay claim in the wary expectation that a *Thomas Hardy Newsletter* had had this one out years ago. No matter. Here's my proof that reading makes you blind.

It is a dark and stormy 6 November. Clym Yeobright has left his cousin Thomasin in his house while he hurries to prevent his wife, Eustacia, eloping. He leaves at midnight. He arrives at about 0014 hours. At 0015, they hear (how?) Eustacia fall in the weir about 200 yards away. Say they arrive – they rush – at 0018. Right. This is what Thomasin does between midnight and her arrival at 0025 (at the latest): (*a*) removes her wet garments, (*b*) takes her baby upstairs, (*c*) comes down and makes a fire, (*d*) sits and has a good think – about the intolerable slowness of time (!) – before she (*d*) goes upstairs, (*e*) comes down and opens the door, (*f*) goes up and gets the baby, (*g*) dresses herself, (*h*) puts the fire out, (*i*) puts the key in the right place, and (*j*) walks at least ¾ mile in a storm, with baby, losing her way. In 25 minutes? Pull the other one!

And what this proves, you'll be asking? Simply this: that when one picks the nits of the nitpicker, one catches, alas, the nits that the nitpicker picked. When you get right down to the nitty, there's little of the gritty left. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2777 **Set by F. R. Spofforth**

Sixteen lines of verse, please, including the following words: curlicue, pungent, megaphone, frolic, splutter, breakfast, ecstasy, burning, thumb, lawn, midnight, suffragette, turret, squeamish, railway, brush. By 15 July.

No 2774 **Set by G. L. Jessop**

Self-evident proverbs.

Report **By Jemima Squiffy**

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A telephone directory needs no index.
You cannot smoke a cigar at both ends.
One plum tree does not make a cherry orchard.
The longest book has a last page.
A small elephant makes a large parcel.
You can't roast an ox in a refrigerator.
Not every tiger wants to be a hearth-rug.
VICTORIA PLUMB

A hen never lays the same egg twice.
A person with false teeth may still speak the truth.
Wet string makes a poor lever.
There are more than two sides to a triangle.
The Thames is as wet as the Tiber.
V. ERNEST COX

A nose in a face is a nose in its place.
It's a wise typist who taps the right keys.
A slug in mucus wins few friends.
A hat that you own is a hat you can loan.
A toe for a head is poor exchange.
JAN RUT-BROWN

It's a strange teapot that hides its spout.
A good scrubbing brush makes a poor breakfast.
A watched pot never writes poetry.
GEORGE SIMMERS

An open door is no defence against thieves.
It's a poor circle that is not round.
The honesty of a policeman does not depend on the size of his helmet. NICHOLAS HODGSON

A gloved hand may hide a gold ring.
Beware the bridge that stops half-way across.
A felled tree will bear no blossom.
BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Him as buys nowt spends nowt.
She that knows why knows wherefore.
Empty vessels carry the least cargo. JIM SNELL

When dog eats dog, there's one dog the less.
Two pounds never made a fiver yet.
GERARD BENSON

Even the hardest chairs may be sat on.
It's a poor itch that provokes no scratch.
P. W. R. FOOT

A monkey in a top-hat is still a monkey.
You can give a cat a dog-licence but you can't make it bark. DEREK BARNARD

A coloured golf ball is no substitute for a boiled egg. ROB HULL

The elephant's tusk is sharper than its trunk.
WILL BELLENGER

A strong voice carries no suitcases.
Your dog may be licensed, but it cannot serve drinks. PETER VEALE

Death is no substitute for a healthy body.
Never trust a fool with a task you would hesitate to give to an idiot. JOE MARSHALL

A lion may roar but the lamb can only bleat.
NICK RENNISON

Many a metre makes a kilometre. ALAN PLATER

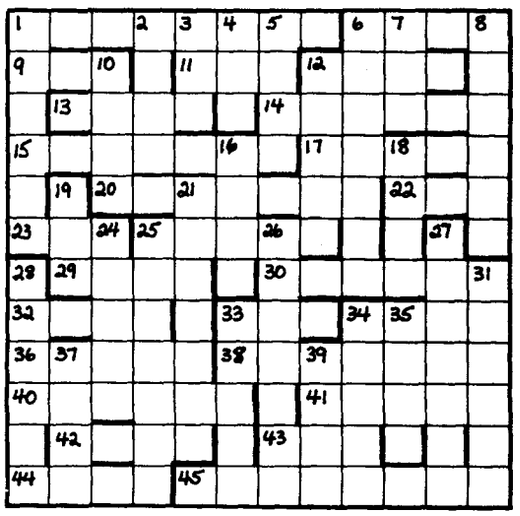
You can't make kippers without smoke.
MICHAEL LEAPMAN

If you lose your spectacles in Harrods, it's no use looking for them in Selfridges.
GAVIN EWART

Salamanca 70

'Paradise Crost'

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 70, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 2 August.



Oh weep not for the first 20(7)
When 22(3) did that first 1Ac.(8) 44(4);
Weep not for 10(4), nor for the 12D(5) –
Weep rather for the 17(5)'s 6Ac.(4)!

For, since the time of that first 39(4),
Man, with the greediest 27(7),
Has 21(7) the poor 17(5)'s 28(6) –
A 26(7) for his 45(8)!

Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

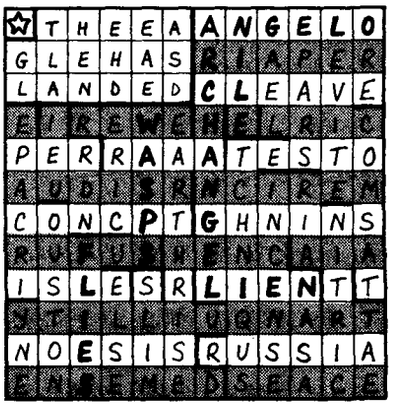
ACROSS

9 They have some part in renovation (3)
11 Take after hesitation? 22 & 10 did (3)
12 12D that may 39 is bound to produce putrefaction (4)
13 Ended mostly changed? (4)
14 What followed the 39 for him and all others after (6)
15 Flesh-eaters, wild, as he and any (7)
23 Love in re of 9 en masse (3)
25 What 22 tried to do to 10? ('E eats, doubtfully) (5)
29 Foreign plan with degree of cunning (4)
30 Fret one time about something to wear (6)
32 Tale sadly resulting in former being departed (4)
33 Cain thus named (3)
34 Powerful 33, it sounds like (4)
36 Like 13 with one business agreement (5)
38 What 19 did to 10 for getting in revolt with a bird organising (7)
40 Wriggly danger here (6)
41 Model's origami? No sir! (5)
42 Sly person takes in novice – tale's over (4)
43 What 22 did, thus being responsible for rash behaviour and the consequences (3)

DOWN

1 Originating with 22 (or 10, perhaps?) (6)
2 Which bore the 17 or the 33Ac. of 19 (4)
3 Man's name for a female (3)
4 Brother following 19 who appears at 33D? (3)
5 Creature acceptable in primitive society (4)
6 Which made an ill present (7)
7 Beast, one displaying gymnastics? (3)
8 T'see me in the best way? (6)
16 2 perhaps leaves one in apt disarray (4)
18 Such riches first and foremost petty embezzlers live for (4)
19 Who was angry to follow up? (3)
24 What 10 became, following 22's example – the source, a 2 produced (5)
25 Machine altered for correction (7)
31 Prepared again – was the 17 a ----? (6)
33 One taking round 39, say, at daybreak (5)
34 This allows no top harm etc. mostly (5)
35 *You'll find* active short dance about this false 19 (4)
37 If recorded, a tape holds them (4)

Solution to Salamanca 69



Theme: The Moon Landing, July 20th 1969. A. Neil (Armstrong), variations anags.; B. (Edwin) Buzz (Aldrin), variations things which buzz; C. Michael (Collins), variations other Michaels. Grid represented the flag planted, number of puzzle and some clues referred direct to the theme.

Prizewinners to Salamanca 69

David Beamish (London SE11)
C.G. Laking (Wellington, NZ)
Les May (Abingdon, Oxon.)

Solution to 1404

Prizewinners to 1404

A. Keefe (London SE7)
S. Newby (Suffolk)
Miss N.M.M. Mackie (Newcastle-upon-Tyne)

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EXPERIENCED, CARING PSYCHOTHERAPISTS. 01-794 6810, 01-586 4109, 01-883 5418.

GAY TEACHER, 40s, Cheshire, seeks genuine friend, 21-40. Interests: music, politics, travel. Box 6204.

GLASGOW MAN, 30, with many interests, seeks similar lady for affectionate relationship. Box 6211.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: Arts graduate (female, 47), seeks interesting, cultured (unattached) male companion. You? Box 6150.

ILLUSTRATED GUIDE to official British Nudist Beaches. Price £3. WWML Books, 8 Newark House, Roundhill Street, Bradford, Yorks.

LESBIANISM. Bachelor (male), youngish 45, lives alone own house, pleasant London suburb Harrow Hill, would genuinely like to contact sympathetic, communicative lady, with knowledge, experience or curiosity of this subject. Box 6168.

ISOLATED HOMOSEXUAL women read Sequel Magazine. Reply: B/M Sequel, London WC1N 3XX.

LITERATE WOMAN, 31, sometimes serious, seldom sensible, loves conversation and music, gardens and the cinema. Seeks similar man. Box 6212.

MALE GRADUATE, 58, London, seeks petite female, 35-50, into classical music, theatre. Box 6200.

PIANO TUNER, reliable, North London only unless repairs needed. Denys Parsons MSc, 01-340 4695.

PROFESSIONAL LADY, 40, based London, requires male companion. Intellectual and cultural interests. Box 6202.

SATURDAY'S CHILD (f.), 45, div., music & theatre lover, interested politics. In hope of rediscovering social life, would like to meet friendly man, London area. Box 6199.

SCANDINAVIA'S LEADING correspondence magazine read in 100 countries, £2.50. Penfriends (NS), 45 Sandringham Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 3RZ.

SHY, UNATTACHED male, 27, Tyneside area, interests: music, politics, literature, cooking needs interesting, caring female of similar age, any area for penfriend. Box 6188.

TALL, UNATTACHED, Indian scholar, linguist, 47, seeks educated, unattached female, 30s, as companion. Interest in France, sunny holidays, good food preferable. Box 6203.

THEATRE, CLASSICAL music, cinema and books are just four of the passions (there are others!) of this very young 53 year-old, tall, divorced, professional man, living in Southern Home Counties. Happiest going to theatre, listening to music, laughing and doing the simple things in life in the company of a warm, intelligent, feminine lady (preferably tall and slim), with a sense of humour. Can I find such a person to share these outlandish pleasures and enjoy a mature and giving relationship? Full details (photo?), much appreciated. Box 6206.

UNIVERSITY LECTURER, 29, doctorate, Oxbridge background, seeks lady, purpose marriage. Box 6193.

WANTED: BUS (smallish), vans, caravan, to buy, hire, borrow for Women's Peace March, 29 July-9 Aug. Also voluntary bus driver. Ring 01-699 6712.

WOULD ANY warm, understanding woman, help recently-divorced London lecturer (literary, musical, 48), find joy in life again? Box 6192.

YOUNG MAN (30), seeks young lady, to enjoy culture, life; sincere only. Box 6187.

LISTINGS

FRI 1 JULY

ROCHFORD, Essex Folk '83 Festival of traditional and contemporary folk music, song and dance, crafts, camping, real ale, wholefood. £11 for all weekend. Ends Sun 3rd. **Details: Betty Pugh, 67 Cromwell Rd, Southend 611165.**

MERTHYR TYDFIL, Glam. CND Summer Social. 7.30pm Bethesda Community Arts Centre. Bar and Entertainment. Tickets 50p. **Details: Anthony Evans 0685 75231.**

LEAMINGTON Alternative radical arts and politics Festival to Fri 8th. **Details & Tickets: The Other Branch Bookshop, 12 Gloucester St, Leamington Spa, Warwicks. 0926 28467.**

LONDON Lessons of the Grenadian Revolution for teachers in Britain. Spkr Bernard Coard, Deputy Prime Minister, People's Revolutionary Gov't of Grenada. 6-8pm, Jeffery Hall, Inst. of Education, 20 Bedford Way, WC1. All welcome. **Org Centre for Multicultural Education and Caribbean Teachers Assn.**

LONDON Benefit concert in aid of East London branch of Troops Out Now movement. Carol Grimes + supporting women's band. Chat's Palace, 42/44 Brooksby's Walk, Homerton, E9. Bar, bookstall, displays. Tickets £2.50/£1.50 unwaged. **Org ToM, East London Branch, Box 13, 136 Kingsland High St, E8.**

SAT 2 JULY

LONDON Meeting to launch Socialist Disability Action Group 12pm County Hall, SE1. Open to all either disabled or who support the right of political expression for disabled people. **Details: 01-808 6030.**

LONDON AGM of Socialist Environment & Resources Assoc. 2.30pm open to general public. Spkr. Jeremy Seabrook 'The Idea of Poverty'. **Org. SERA, 9 Poland St. W1.**

LONDON Interested in going to China? Talks and slideshows 10.30am-4.30pm St Pancras Church House, Lancing St, NW1. £2 non-membs. £1 membs. **Org. SACU (Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding) 01-267 9841.**

LONDON Blues in the Bowl, GLC Peace Picnic 12-8pm Crystal Palace. Adm. free.

LONDON 'Prevent and Survive' Symposium. 9.30-4.30pm, Central Hall Westminster, SW1. Tickets £9/students, nurses, UB40 £5 incls. lunch. Tickets at door or from orgs: **Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons,, 31 Stavordale Rd, N5.**

LONDON NALGO 'Put People First Festival' at Alexandra Palace. Noon-10.30pm. Fun and entertainment for all the family. Jazz bands, clowns inflatables, creche. Evening top line entertainment. The Flying Pickets, Hank Wangford Band, Holloway All Stars. Snack bars, Licensed Bars. Stalls manned by trades unions and community groups. **Details and advance tickets (SAE) £2/£1 UB40s & OAPs (accompanied children free): Jill Hughes, NALGO, 17 Highfield Road, NW11. 01-458 9211.**

SUN 3 JULY

LONDON 'Human scale in Philosophy' 11am Library, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Sq, WC1. Spkr. Peter Heales. **Org. South Place Ethical Society.**

LONDON Gala Variety Show in aid of The Samaritans National Appeal. Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, WC1. Many famous names incl. Glenda Jackson, Cleo Laine and John Dankworth, Michael Palin and Tim Brook Taylor. **Tickets and details: Beth Porter 01-289 7458.**

MON 4 JULY

LONDON 'Imperialism, Nationalism and Architecture in Britain, 1880-1015' History Workshop Seminar. Spkrs. Rodney Mace & Alex Potts. Adm. free. **7.30pm at the Black Horse, Rathbone Pl. W1.**

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S BLOCKADE AT GREENHAM COMMON AIRBASE 'Arms are for Linking – together we can stop Cruise'. **Details: July 4 Action, Greenham Office, 5 Leonard Street, London EC2. 01-251 3133.**

TUES 5 JULY

LONDON US Hands off El Salvador and Nicaragua. Picket of US Embassy, Grosvenor Square, W1. 4.30-7.30pm. **Orgs. El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, Chile Solidarity Campaign, 29 Islington Park St, N1. 01-359 2270.**

WED 6 JULY

LONDON 'Time for a Nuclear Freeze?' Public Meeting 7.30pm Central Hall, Westminster. Spkrs. incl. Bishop of Salisbury, Lord Fenner Brockway, Jonathan Dimbleby. Adm. Free. Collection. **Org: UNA/World Disarmament Campaign, 238 Camden Road, NW1 01-485 1067.**

LONDON Homelessness and the Voluntary Sector. Seminar 2-4.45pm Nat. Inst. for Social Work, 5 Tavistock Pl. WC1. Fee £2.50 membs./£3.00 non-membs. **Tickets and details ARVAC 26 Queen's Rd, Wivenhoe, Essex. Pat Marsden 0206 22 5344.**

LONDON 'A Peaceful Vision for a Violent World' second of five workshops on nonviolence. Spkr. Prof. James O'Connell. 6.45-8.45pm St. James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, W1. **Org. Dunamis 01-437 6851.**

THURS 7 JULY

LONDON 'Conservation versus democratic revolution'. Public debate. Spkrs. Tony Jones, Ecology Party v. Pieter Lawrence, Socialist Party of Gt. Britain. Adm. free. 8pm Prince Albert Pub, Wharfdale Rd, Kings Cross, N1. **Org. SPGB 01-622 3811.**

LONDON 'Permanent Unemployment?' Discussion. Spkrs. Geoff Kay and Makoto Itoh. 8pm The Wheatsheaf, Rathbone Pl., W1. **Org. Conf. of Socialist Economists.**

LONDON 'Women and Peace in the GDR'. Film and day school-on Sat. 9th to help further cooperation between women in the West and East. Adm. £2 waged/£1 unwaged. Women only. 7.30pm Jackson's Lane Community Centre/ Archway Rd, N7. Day School 10am-5pm (Sat. 9 July) Workshops, talks, discn., bookstall. Creche. Bring own lunch (coffee/tea provided). **Org. END. Details Franke, 52 Morsland Ct. Finchley Rd., NW2. 01-435 4920.**

NEWCASTLE 'Latin American Fiesta' to celebrate 4th anniversary of free Nicaragua. Food, singing, dancing, music. 7.30-12.00pm St. Thomas Church, Haymarket. Tickets £1/50p unwaged Newcastle 320842 or at door. **Org. Newcastle Latin American Front.**

FORTHCOMING

9 JULY BAMBURGH, Northumberland. 'The ILP Yesterday and Today. Spkrs. David Howell and Barry Winter. Celebration of 90th anniversary of the founding of ILP. **Details ILP, 49 Top Moor Side, Leeds. 0532 430613.**

9-10 JULY Edinburgh. Feminist Writers Conference. Women only. Free creche, lunch, coffee, tea available. Accommodation available – bring sleeping bag. **Details and Registration Lavender Menace Bookshop, 11a Forth Street, Edinburgh 031-556 0079.**

9 JULY Sheffield. Strategy for Free Access Conf. for all interested and actively involved in campaigning for access to our rural heritage 11am-4.30pm Bow Centre Holly Street. £2.50/£1 unwaged. To be followed by Mass Trespass on Midhope Moor on Sun 10th July. Overnight accommodation available. **Details Julian Batsleer, 50 Ogard Rd, Hoddesdon, Herts. 0992 441705.**

10 JULY Battersea Park. 4th annual Summer Festival. 12-6pm. Org. Battersea & Wandsworth Trades Council **Details and stalls Melvin Benn 01-622 9966/01-228 9154.**

13 JULY Richmond 'Marx would be turning in his grave'. Spkrs. incl. Prof. David McLellan, Kent University. 8pm **Starr House, 57 Church Rd.**

13 JULY London 'Acid Rain – is Britain poisoning Europe?' Public meeting 7pm Grand Committee Room, House of Commons. Adm. free. **Details SERA 01-439 3749.**

16 JULY London Labour Movement Conference on Ireland. 10am Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1. Delegates £3/Observers £2. **Registration Box 189, 32 Ivor Pl, NW1.**

15-17 JULY Shelter Housing Conference University of Nottingham. **Details and booking form: The Conference Organiser, Shelter, 157 Waterloo Road, London, SE1 8XF. 01-633 9377. Closing date 11 July.**

29 JULY-9 AUGUST Women for Life on Earth Star Marches 1983. London to Greenham: **Details 01-699 6712/01-701 4566.** Marches will converge on Greenham from all over the country on Hiroshima Day, 6 August. **For details of other marches: London Greenham Office: 5 Leonards Street, EC2 01-251 3133.**

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